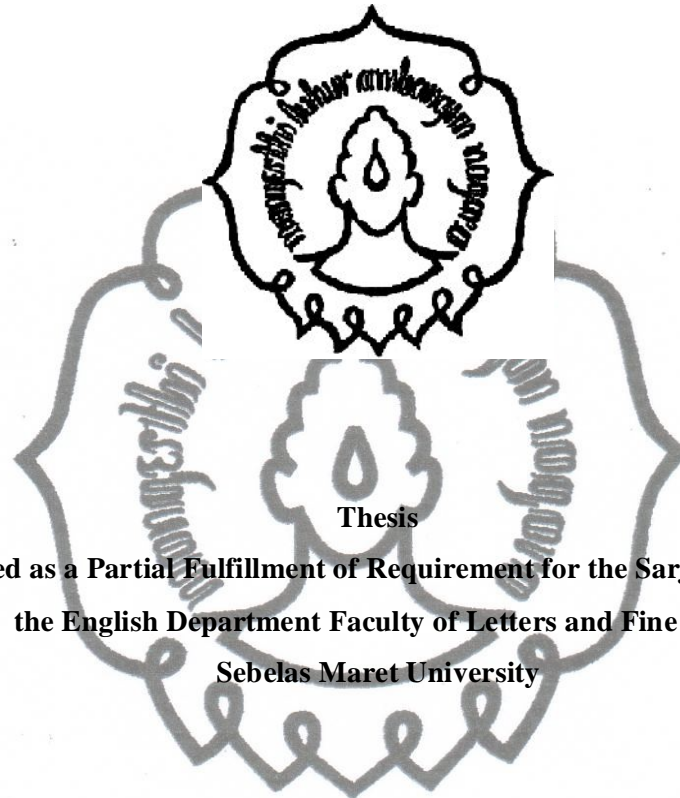


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**MYTHS, BELIEFS AND VALUES REFLECTED IN
THE 79TH ANNUAL ACADEMY AWARD'S NIGHT
AS AN AMERICAN POPULAR RITUAL**



Thesis

**Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of Requirement for the Sarjana Degree at
the English Department Faculty of Letters and Fine Arts
Sebelas Maret University**

By:

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**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF LETTERS AND FINE ARTS
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SURAKARTA
2010**

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Stated whole-heartedly that this thesis entitled **ACADEMY AWARDS NIGHT AN AMERICAN POPULAR RITUAL** (*Myths, Beliefs and Values Reflected in the 79th Annual Academy Award's Night*) is originally made by the researcher. It is neither a plagiarism, nor made by others. The things related to other people's work are written in quotation and included within bibliography.

If it is then proved that the researcher cheats, the researcher is ready to take the responsibility.

Surakarta, December 2010

The Researcher

Apriana Susanti

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MOTTO

*FAITH DOES NOT MAKE EVERYTHING COME EASY, BUT IT MAKES
EVERYTHING POSSIBLE IF YOU KEEP ON BELIEVE IT*

(N.N.)

NOTHING IN LIFE IS TO BE FEARED. IT IS ONLY TO BE UNDERSTOOD

(Marie Curie)



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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to:

My beloved father and mother

And

All who have supported me



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All praise and gratitude to my Almighty God, Jesus Christ. This thesis would not be finished without His bless and guidance. The researcher needed lots of time, energy and patience to finish this thesis. The researcher realized that without the support and encouragement from people around the researcher, this thesis would not be done. Therefore, I would like to give special thanks to people who give contribution to my thesis. I owe a debt of gratitude to:

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6. My beloved father and mummy. Thank you for giving me plenty of love, support, patience and prayer every day. I will not be here without you. I love you both, very much.
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ABSTRACT

Apriana Susanti. C0303013. ACADEMY AWARDS NIGHT AN AMERICAN POPULAR RITUAL (Myths, Beliefs and Values Reflected in the 79th Annual Academy Award's Night). Thesis: English Department. Faculty of Letters and Fine Arts. Sebelas Maret, Surakarta.

This research was conducted in order to describe the myths, beliefs and values reflected in The 79th Annual Academy Award's Night and how those myths are reflected in the ritual.

This is a library research which employs descriptive qualitative method. The primary data for this research are images seen from photographs of the Oscar Night and information from the Academy Award Rules and articles about the ceremony taken from the official websites of Academy Award www.academyawards.com and www.oscars.org. The secondary data are in the form of images seen from pictures and information taken from articles, journals and other related writings.

To analyze the data, the researcher applied theories. They were American Popular Culture theory by J. Nachbar and K. Laue and Semiotic theory of Roland Barthes. Biographical approach was applied to understand the stage of life of the Oscar winner. The historical background of the Academy Award was also important in this research in order to gather more information about the ritual.

The result of this analysis shows that there are four myths that are reflected in this ritual, they are myth of material success, myth of beauty, myth of endless abundance, and myth of romantic love.

The 79th Annual Academy Awards Night reflects myths in every part and details of the ceremony. In the preparation of the ceremony the 79th Annual Academy Award's Night reflects the myth of success. Meanwhile the Red Carpet of the 79th Annual Academy Award reflects the myth of beauty, myth of romantic love, myth of material success, and myth of endless abundance. The bestowed ceremony of the 79th Annual Academy Award reflects the myth of material success. The judges and judging process of the Academy Award reflects the myth of success. The winner of the award reflects myth of material success. While the icon of the Academy Award, the Oscar statue, reflects the myth of success.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

Life goes on from one phase to another. People often hold ceremonies to mark the shift between the phases. Birthdays, graduations, weddings, funerals are part of the ceremonies that are held to mark their journey to the next level of life. In so many cultures there are also ceremonies which are held to gather people who share the same mental experience and have same vision, such as Mardi Grass, Christmas, Flower Festival in Rio de Janeiro, etc. On the other hand, ceremonies are also aimed to celebrate things, for example The 4th of July, New Year's Eve, etc. "Life without ceremony as this is unthinkable", as Nachbar and Lause said, "To be human is to participate in rituals" (1992: 376).

America is a country of so many nations. There are so many tribes and cultures exist and even blend in America. As a country with a multicultural society, America also has various cultural occasions such as Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, etc. Those rituals are celebrated by most of American people. Although they come from different races and have various cultures but in those occasions they blend and get along each other. Occasions or rituals can give them the feeling of unity and brotherhood. Therefore they repeat the occasion and celebrate it with the belief that it will give a good impact to them and their life.

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One of the rituals is Academy Award. Every year The Academy Award is held in Hollywood, the center of movie making and movie industry in America which has the greatest influence to movie industry in the world. The Academy Award has become the measurement of success not only in Hollywood but also in the world of movie making around the world. Someone or something will be called successful in movie industry if they at least become the nominator of The Academy Award. The long history of the Academy award or also known as Oscar makes the award become the most prestigious award in movie industry.

Every year Hollywood community celebrates Academy Award as one of the most prestigious awards in movie industry. Many people are involved in this celebration from movie freaks to the experts. The preparation also involves a lot of people and efforts, from the individual preparation of the participants to the preparation of the Awarding itself. The excitement of the Oscar flows from the top level of the member of the movie industry to the bottom. Thousand people even come from across the country and camp around The Kodak Theatre for several days to get the best view to see the celebrities. The number of live and television viewers also become remarkable from year to year. The celebrities also prepare lots of thing from make-up, hair do, dress, and even take intensive training to get the nearly perfect look in the Awarding Night.

The fact that The Academy Award become very popular in America and get the attention of so many American people, and

furthermore people around the world, cannot escape the researcher's curiosity. This is why in this research the researcher was eager to find the answer of why this ritual becomes very popular in America and what American's beliefs and values are reflected in this ritual.

B. Scope Of Study

To avoid the rambling analysis and to achieve the aim of the research, it is necessary to limit this study. In accordance to the objectives of this study, this research was focused on the arrangement or structure of the ritual itself, which was The 79th Academy Award Night, presented on February 25, 2007, at the Kodak Theatre at Hollywood & Highland Center and the award winner on five categories. The analyses toward The 79th Annual Academy Award were focused on some aspects, the preparation, the red carpet activities, the bestowed ceremony, the award winner, the judges and judging process, and the Oscar statuette. While the award winners consist of Forest Whitaker for Best Actor winner, Helen Mirren for Best Actress winner, Alan Arkin for Best Supporting Actor winner, Jennifer Hudson for Best Supporting Actress winner, and Martin Scorsese for The Best Director winner.

C. Research Questions

The of the research were gathered to answer research questions that are mentioned bellow:

1. What myths, beliefs and values of American society are reflected in The 79th Annual Academy Award Night?
2. How are those myths, beliefs and values of American society reflected in The 79th Annual Academy Award Night?

D. Objectives Of Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To describe what myths, beliefs and values of American society that are reflected in The 79th Annual Academy Award Night.
2. To explain how those myths, beliefs and values of American society are reflected in The 79th Annual Academy Award Night.

E. Benefits Of Study

It is expected that this research can give input in relation to the study of popular ritual, in this case Academy Award. This research is also expected to give the readers a description of the importance of Academy Award Night in American society and why this ritual becomes very popular among American people. Moreover, for the readers, especially the students of American Studies Program, this research is also expected to

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enable to lay a foundation for a further study about Academy Award and other popular rites in the future

F. Methodology of Research

1. Type of Research

This research applies a library research. It means all of the data and information to this research were taken from text books and other printed materials, such as magazines, journals, papers, and so on. Besides making use of the official websites of The Academy Award, printed materials and text books, the researcher also collected the data from online media or internet which provides related articles and other important publications. The researcher also took into account some other sources that may contribute to the validity of this research.

The researcher employed *Descriptive Qualitative Research*. In this descriptive research, the researcher looked for, collected, classified, then analyzed the data to draw conclusion. Emmanuel J. Mason and William J. Brambel in their book *Research in Education and The Behavioral Sciences, Concepts and Methods* stated that descriptive research is a broad spectrum of research activities having the common purpose of describing situation, events or phenomena. While Qualitative Research represents a point of view more than it does a particular methodology. Qualitative inquiry tends to emphasise meaning in context

more than specific finding in the form of facts or particular element of knowledge (1997: 68-69).

In order to focus in such matters only, "*Purposive Sampling Technique*" was applied to collect the data. This technique was applied to reach a certain purpose based on previous knowledge. Intentionally, it will consider only some *key areas*. It means that not all of the population will be represented by the research sample (Hadi, 1980:81-82). In this research the key area was The 79th Annual Academy Award.

2. Data and Source of Data

The data in this research were divided into two, the primary data and the secondary data. The primary data were the images seen from photographs of the Oscar Night and information from the Academy Award Rules and articles about the ceremony taken from the official websites of Academy Award www.academyawards.com and www.oscars.org. The secondary data were in the form of images seen from pictures and information taken from articles, journals and other related writings, such as pictures from www.viewimages.com, www.emol.org, article from Eve Magazine, and many others.

3. Technique of Collecting and Analyzing Data

The data in this research were gathered from downloading the official websites of Academy Award and other sites and from other printed media, such as magazines, journals, essays and television programs that were related to the topic. All of the data were specified and categorized based on the type of data. The first step in analyzing the data was reading the data, then analyzing the primary and secondary data by applying the approaches and theories. The last was drawing the conclusion in order to answer the research questions.

G. Theoretical Approach

Since this research was within the field of American Studies, in terms of American Popular Culture, interdisciplinary approaches were needed in order to find out the answers to the problem statements. By applying interdisciplinary studies it was expected that this research achieved its aims and able to give more understanding and description of the American experience to the readers. As Joseph J. Kwiatt and Marry C. Turpin said that “the defining characteristic of American studies is not the size of the problem, but the effort to view any given subjects of investigation from many perspectives to take into account as many aspect of it as possible” (1980: 3). Alongside to the statement, the researcher applied interdisciplinary approaches to give as many point of view as

possible toward the rites so that the answers to the research questions are maximal.

The very first approach that was applied in this research is the cultural approach. The object of this study was a part of American popular culture, which is ritual, therefore, it is necessary to apply American Popular Culture Theory in this research. As J. Nachbar and K. Laue said in their book *Popular Culture: An Introductory Text* that “popular beliefs and values are the meanings which lie behind the artifacts and events which are their visible expressions – they are the truths which explain the facts and thus weave existence into a pattern which we can recognise and share.” (1998: 82). Thus the researcher believe that we can find out American experience through The Academy Award.

The semiotic approach was also applied in this research. Roland Barthes’ semiotic theory was applied on this research. As he said and translated by Annett Lavers in *Mythologies* that “everything can be myth provided” (1999: 109) and “for any material thing can arbitrarily be endowed with meaning” (1999: 110). Therefore, this theory is a tool to analyze the main and supporting data and to find out the signs reflected by the photographs and the pictures.

In this research, the researcher also considered the importance of using the Hegemony theory in this research. The used of this theory was aimed to give the reader perspective of how the beliefs and values became

a part of American background knowledge in seeing something in their daily life. For that reason the researcher applied Antonio Gramsci's Hegemony theory.

Since the researcher also analyzed the Academy Award winners, the biographical approach was also needed in this research. The biographical approach was needed in order to understand the Academy Award winners' stages of life and to understand how the myths, beliefs and values were reflected by them.

Last but not least, the historical background of The Academy Award was also important in this research. It was needed in order to know the background of the ritual and since when this ritual was popular among the American people. It was also needed in order to gather more information about the icon of The Academy Award, which is The Oscar statue.

H. Thesis Organization

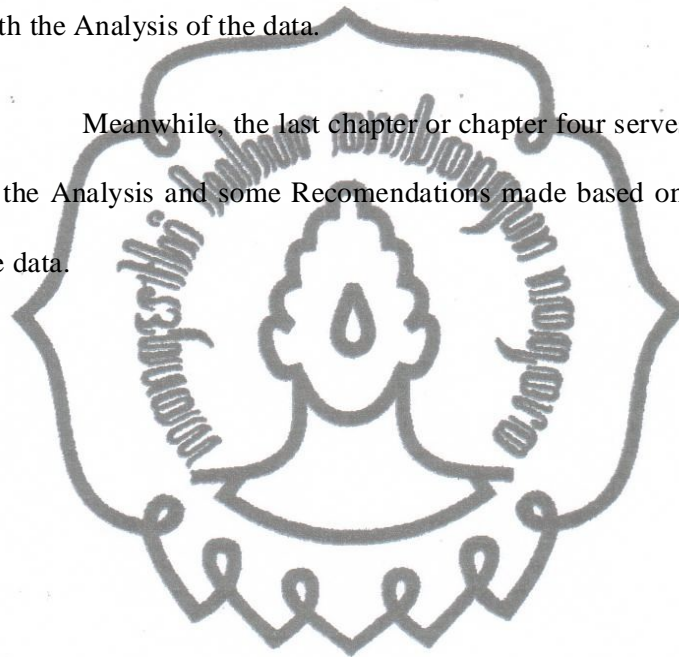
The first chapter in this thesis provides us the Introduction to this research from Research Background, Scope of Study, Research Questions, Objectives of Study, Benefits of Study, Research Methodology, Theoretical Approach and Thesis Organization.

In the second chapter we can find the Literature Review of this research; from the history of the Academy Award, the semiotic theory of

Roland Barthes, the hegemony theory by Gramsci, the biography of the 79th Academy Award winner, Popular ritual in Popular Culture Theory, and the myths, beliefs and values of the American society.

The chapter three, which is the core of this thesis, provides us with the Analysis of the data.

Meanwhile, the last chapter or chapter four serves the conclusion of the Analysis and some Recommendations made based on the analysis of the data.



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Academy Award Past and Present

Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (A.M.P.A.S.) holds varied programs and events every year. The programs and events range from cultural and educational agenda. The Academy Awards Night is the peak of all the AMPAS' activities during a year.

Although there are many sources that provided the information of The Academy Awards Night, the researcher chose to use the information from the official websites of Academy Award in order to maintain the accountability of the data.

1. Venues

The Annual Academy Award has been held since 1929. The first Academy Award Night happened on May 16, 1929. It was firstly presented at a private dinner, a banquet, in the Blossom Room of the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel with no media involvement or broadcast coverage. The banquet was very long and filled with speeches. The attendances were 270 and the guest ticket cost \$5.

The banquet affairs were lasted for 15 years and were held at the Ambassador and Biltmore hotels. The increase of the attendance and the other causes, such as wars, had made the tradition of

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presenting the statuettes at a banquet impractical. Therefore, the AMPAS hold the presentation ceremony in the theaters since then.



First Awards Banquet, May 16, 1929
(<http://www.oscars.org/aboutacademyawards/history02.html>: October 26, 2007, 06.18pm)



Kodak Theatre at the Hollywood & Highland Center®, and televised live by the ABC Television Network on February 25, 2007.
(<http://emol.org/film/archives/academyawards/2007/behindthescenes.html>: October 26, 2007, 03.47pm)

The 16th Annual Academy Award was held at Grauman's Chinese Theatre. After three years at Grauman's Chinese Theatre, the ceremony was moved to Los Angeles Shrine Auditorium. The Academy Award ceremonies traveled from one theatre to another since then. For 12 years, the ceremony was held at the Music Center before it went back to Shrine Auditorium for 6 years. Since 2002, the Annual Academy Award has been held at the Kodak Theater at Hollywood and Highland Center.

2. Broadcast Coverage

The enthusiasm and interest in the Academy Award ceremony has run high. The first Academy Award ceremony was the only ceremony that escaped from the media audience. By the second year,

a Los Angeles radio station did an hour live broadcast of the event and has had broadcast coverage at every presentation since then.

The first Annual Academy Award covered by network radio and broadcast overseas to American people is the 16th Annual Academy Award that was held at the Grauman's Chinese Theater. On March 19, 1953 the Annual Academy Award was first televised. The NBC-TV and radio network broadcast the 25th Annual Academy Award live from Hollywood with Bob Hope as the Master of Ceremony, and from the NBC International Theater in New York with Fredric March making presentation. In 1961 and for the next 10 years, the ABC-TV and radio network handled the broadcast duties. The Annual Academy Award was first broadcast in color in 1966. From 1971 to 1975 the NBC carried the Awards but in 1976 the NBC had taken over the broadcast duties and televised the show since then. ABC also has contracted the show until 2014. The Annual Academy Award is the only award ceremony televised nation wide.

3. Voting

The suspense of waiting the announcement of the Oscar winner not always has been a characteristic of the Academy Award presentation. In the first year, the award recipients were announced to the public 3 months ahead of the ceremony. For the next decade, the result was priory given to newspaper for publication at 11 pm on the night of the award. But, in 1940, the Los Angeles Time announced the

result in their evening edition so that the guest could read it before they went to the award. As a result the AMPAS adopted the sealed-envelope system the next year and it remain in use today.

The independency and secrecy are being strictly maintained by the AMPAS. To make sure that each of more than 5.000 AMPAS' voting members see their film, the AMPAS uses varied mailing companies so that it will be free admission to commercial runs of a film and the mailing of DVDs. Nominations ballots are mailed by the AMPAS in late December and members will have to return their secret ballots to PricewaterhouseCoopers, the professional auditing firm. The result of the nomination balloting will be announced at 5.30 am at the press conference during the last week of January at the AMPAS' Samuel Goldwyn Theater in Beverly Hills. Final ballots will be mailed in early February and members will have 2 weeks to return them. After the final ballots are tabulated, only 2 partners of PricewaterhouseCoopers will know the results until the envelopes are opened on stage during the Annual Academy Award presentation.

Since the members of the AMPAS are the most gifted and skilled artists and craftsmen in the motion picture world, the Award itself stands as a symbol of superior achievement in the world of movie making. Balloting for nominations in each category is restricted to members of the Academy branch concern. For instance, only actors determine the nominees in the acting categories. Meanwhile, for the

best picture nominations and final winners in most categories are determined by vote of the entire membership. Beside the 24 categories of regular award, there are also special awards and honorary awards, which are empowered by the Academy's Board of Governors. Special awards and honorary awards are given for outstanding and extraordinary achievements that are not recognized within the category structure of the Academy Award.

4. Academy Members

The AMPAS was formed in 1927 by 36 of the most prominent people in the film industry. These people are known as Board of Governors. The first president of AMPAS was Sr. Douglas Fairbanks, who was an actor. To meet the excellence standard of film industry, the AMPAS needs a voting board of which members are the most gifted and skilled people in their field in order to decide which film or person deserves to accept the award.

The voting board was later known as the Academy. All members must be invited to join the Academy and the invitation comes from the Board of Governors. Although winning an Academy Award usually results in an invitation, membership of the Academy is not an automatic. Membership can be achieved by applying proposal to the AMPAS. A member may submit a name based on other significant contributions to the field of motion pictures. New membership proposals are considered annually.

Academy membership is divided into 15 branches, representing different disciplines in motion pictures, for instance, actors, actress, directors, producers, film editing, composers, etc. Members may not belong to more than one branch. When a person, who has not been a member yet, is nominated in more than one category in a single year resulting in an invitation from more than one branch, she/he must choose which branch when she/he accepts the membership. Members whose discipline is not mentioned, or outside of the branches, may belong to a group known as “Member At Large”.

5. Nominations

The AMPAS also made Rules that have to be obeyed by a film or person, to be part of Annual Academy Award. According to Rules 2 and 3 of the official Academy Award Rules, a film has to be opened in previous calendar year (from midnight at the start of January 1 to midnight at the end of December 31) in Los Angeles County California, to qualify. Rule 2 states that a film must be “feature-length” (at least 40 minutes) to qualify for an award (except for Short Subject Awards). It must also exist either on a 35 mm or 70 mm film print or on a 24 fps or 48 fps progressive scan digital film print with a native resolution no lower than 1280 x 720 (<http://www.oscars.org/80academyawards/rules/index.html>; April 14, 2007, 03.46 pm).

The members can only nominate those in their specified branch, for instance, actors are nominated by the actor's branch, while all the members may submit nominees for Best Picture. The winners are determined by a second vote in which all members are then allowed to vote in most categories.

6. The Award

Shortly after the AMPAS was incorporated, the Board of Governors made a decision to achieve their aim. The aim is encouraging higher levels of quality in motion picture production. Therefore, the AMPAS agreed to institute an award. To support that idea, an item or a trophy was needed to represent honor for outstanding achievement in film industry.

The trophy or the statue was designed by Metro Goldwyn Mayer (MGM) art director, Cedric Gibbon, and was sculpted by George Stanley. The figure of the statue is a knight holding a sword, standing on a reel of film that has five spokes that are representing the five original branches of the award; actors, writers, directors, producers and technicians. In the former years, the statue was made from copper, silver and nickel alloy and covered with 24 carat gold. Nowadays, it is made from britania metal, a pewter-like alloy and covered with 24 carat gold. However, due to the metals shortage during World War II, the statues were made of plaster. After the war, the recipients turned in these plaster statues for Golden Oscar.



(<http://www.afb.org/Section.asp?SectionID=1&TopicID=181&DocumentID=1052>; March 11, 2010, 03.22 pm.)

OSCAR'S HEIGHT	13 ½ IN
Oscar's weight	8 ½ lbs
Number of Oscars presented at Academy Awards shows or to winners absent from show to date	2,622
How many people it takes to make a statuette	12
How long it takes to make a statuette	20 hrs
Number of Oscars manufactured each year	50-60
How many Oscars have been refused	3
Number of decorative prop Oscar statues	65
Smallest decorative prop Oscar statue	1½ ft
Tallest decorative prop Oscar statue	24 ft

(<http://www.oscar.com/legacy/?pn=statuette>; April 14, 2007, 05.32 pm.)

The official name of this statue is 'The Academy Award of Merit' but in its journey it has been called 'The Golden Trophy', 'The Statue of Merit', 'The Iron Man' and the most popular and later was officially use, 'The Oscar'. The root of the name 'Oscar' is still debated. There are stories around it but based on the official sites of Academy Award, the nickname was started by the Academy Librarian. Margaret Herrick, an Academy librarian and eventually become an executive director, thought that the statue was resembled

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her uncle whose name Oscar. Since then he began to referring to it as Oscar. By the sixth award presentation in 1934, Hollywood columnist, Sidney Skolsky, used the nickname in his column in reference to Katherine Hepburn's first best actress win. The nickname itself was not officially used by the Academy until 1939.

There are only 24 categories in the award but each year approximately 50 Oscars are made in Chicago by the manufacturer, R.S. Owen. When they do not meet the quality control standards, the statuettes are immediately cut in half and melted down. The academy does not know how many Oscars will actually be handed out at the Annual Academy Award ceremony until the envelopes are opened on the Oscar Night. Although the number of category is priory known, the possibility of multiple recipients sharing the prize in some categories makes the exact number of Oscars awarded unpredictable. Any surplus statuettes will be kept in the Academy's vault until next Annual Academy award. Since 1949 the Oscar statuettes began to be numbered, starting with an arbitrary number 501. Each statuette worn this number behind its heel.

Since 1950, the Oscar statuettes have been legally protected by a requirement that neither winner nor their heirs may sell the statuettes without first offering to sell them back to the Academy for \$ 1. When a winner refuses to agree to this requirement, the Academy will keep the statue. This rule is still very controversial since it

implies that the winner does not own the award. However, the award recipients agreed to this rule and it makes the academy win if there is any legal battle.

B. Biography of The Oscar Winner

Since this research was focused on several aspect of the Academy Award, including the Oscar winner, the researcher found it necessary to include the biography of the winner to give the reader background knowledge about the Oscar winner. Data for the biographies were taken from the internet sources. They were downloaded from online encyclopedia and official websites of the award winners. It was conducted to maintain the accuracy of the data.

1. Biography of Forest Whitaker

Forest Steven Whitaker was born in Longview Texas on July 15, 1961. He is a second child of fourth siblings of Forest Whitaker Jr., an insurance salesman, and Laura Francis, a teacher. Due to racism in 1965, Forest and his family moved to South Central Los Angeles. In high school, he was a football player and also took a voice lesson and performed in a musical drama for his first time.

After graduating from Palisades High School in LA, he attended Cal Poly Pomona on football scholarship. Due to a back injury, he left Cal Poly Pomona and was accepted to the Music Conservatory at the University of Southern California (USC) where he

studied opera as a tenor. Here, he also joined in the university's drama Conservatory. He graduated from USC in 1982 and earned a scholarship from Berkeley, California Branch of the Drama Studio London.

Whitaker started his career as a co-star in *'Fast times at Ridgemont High'* (1982) alongside Nicholas Cage and Sean Penn. Since then, he appeared as a co-star in many movies. He had his first lead role in *'Bird'* (1988), a film by Clint Eastwood, where he won for Best Actor in Cannes Film Festival and a Golden Globe nomination. Besides winning the award, he also won the critics' opinions that called his performance as "transcendent".

Whitaker always gives his best effort for his every role. For example, his performance in *'Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai'*. He studied Eastern philosophy and spent long hours to meditate in order to get into his character's mind. For his optimal effort to get into his character's world, the film critics often give him a good credit. However, Whitaker's career was not always satisfied the film critics and viewers. In 2000, he won seven categories in Razzie Award (award for 'the worst' in movie making) in his movie, *"Battlefield Earth"*. The 79th Academy Award is his first experience of winning an Oscar.

2. Biography of Helen Mirren

Dame Helen Miren was born on 26th July 1945 in West London, England. Mirren actually is an English actress. Her father was a Russian origin, her grandfather is a tsarist colonel and diplomat who stayed in England during the Russian Revolution. Her mother, Kathleen Alexandrina Eva Matilda, was an England origin and was the thirteenth of fourteen children of Queen Victoria's Butcher. Her father called himself Basil and decided to change his family name into Mirren in 1950's. Helen Mirren was the second of three children.

Mirren's long career history was started at Catholic girl's school, St. Bernard's High School for Girls, where she acted in a school drama production. Since then, her love to the acting world was becoming bigger as she was accepted in National Youth Theatre at the age 20. Her works at National Youth Theatre brougther to join the Royal Shakespeare Company, where she played lots of Shakespeare's drama.

In 1967, she started to have cast on Hollywood movies after being discovered by Al Parker, a talent agent. During her film career, Mirren still gives special attention for her works on drama and theater and she achieved great review from the Critics. In 1976, she even received the Plays & Players Best Actress award, voted by the London critics, for her role as a rock star in "*Teeth 'n' Smiles*".

During her film and television career, Mirren had already received lots of awards including four Screen Actors Guild Award, four BAFTA's, three Golden Globe, four Emmy Awards, and an Oscar for her role as Queen Elizabeth II in "*The Queen*" (2006). However, her achievement was not only in film and theater. In 2003, the Royal Family of England gave her an honour and declined her as Commander of the Order for his dedication in film and theater.

3. Biography of Alan Arkin

Alan Wolf Arkin was born on March 26, 1934 in Brooklyn, New York. He is Russian and German origin. His mother, Beatrice was a teacher and his father, David Arkin, was an artist and writer, who worked as a teacher. In 1946, Alan moved to Los Angeles where his father had a job as a set designer. In 1950, his father lost his job and was accused of being communist. Alan was raised in a Jewish family but no emphasis on religion.

Alan has shown his fond of art since he was at the young age. At 10 he took various courses on music and acting. He attended Franklin High School in Los Angeles, then Los Angeles City College (1951-1953) and Bennington College (1953-1954). He sang in a college folk-band and joined in a drama class. He ever recorded an album and reached number four at the Billboard chart. However, his music career did not run well as his acting career.

The 79th Academy Award was not the first time Arkin got involved in this celebration. He often gets Oscar nomination in his films. He is one of the only eight actors who is nominated for Best Actor in his first screen appearance (for "*The Russian Are Coming, the Russian are Coming*" in 1966). Two years later, he was again nominated for Best Actor in Academy Award in "*The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*" (1968). During his career, he was nominated for many times in many awards including BAFTA and Golden Globe. However, his great achievement came in 2007 where he received Oscar award for Best Supporting Actor in "*Little Miss Sunshine*".

4. Biography of Jennifer Hudson

Jennifer Kate Hudson is an African-American actress. She was born on September 12, 1981. She is the third and youngest child of Darnell Donnerson (died in 2008) and Samuel Simpson (died in 1999). She graduated from Dunbar Vocational Career Academy in 1999. On the age of seven, she started to perform singing with the church choir and joining the community theater. Hudson worked at the Burger King in Chicago until she joined the 3rd season of American Idol.

Hudson first appearance on screen was when she first joined the American Idol in 2004. She did not win the contest but just ended up in 7th position. However, her career not ended up in 7th position of the American Idol. In 2005, she was cast for the musical film

"Dreamgirls". She won the role over hundreds of professional singers and actresses, including the 3rd season American Idol winner, Fantasia Barrino. This movie was released on January 2007 and gained very good response from the Critics. Hudson then received lots of awards for her role in this movie, among others are the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress, a Golden Globe Award, a BAFTA Award, a Screen Actors Guild Award, etc.

In October 2008, Hudson's mother and brother were killed at their house in Chicago. After this incident Hudson decided not to make any public appearance and resumed for 3 months. Hudson made her comeback by singing the national anthem of USA at Super Bowl. Up till now in 2010, Hudson had made four more movies, *"Sex and the City"* (2008), *"The Secret Lives of Bees"* (2008), *"Fragments"* (2009), and the latest is *"Winnie"* (2010) which is still in the making process, and still more to come.

5. Biography of Martin Scorsese

Martin Scorsese was born on November 17th, 1942, in New York. He is of Italian American origin. Both of his parents worked in a garment factory. As a child, his parents often brought him to the movie theater where he learned to love cinema. His primary passion to become a priest, while he joined Cardinal Hayes High School, was forsaken for cinema and resulted in joining the New York University (NYU) Film School. He earned M.F.A. in film making (in 1966).

Scorsese began his directing career with documentary films, as he attended the NYU Film School. At this time, Scorsese took his Sicilian background for his movie's theme. During his career, Scorsese made lot of breakthrough in his movies. At first, the critics even considered his work as an anomaly (in "Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore" (1974) where he focused on a central female character). Later, Scorsese won the critics' opinion in his movie "Taxi Driver" (1976), in which he received his first Oscar nomination for his film, but not for himself yet.

Although his friend already stated to him that making entertaining movies can be ended with having no money and time, Scorsese decided to work on his first big budget movie "New York, New York" (1977). The theme song gained an enormous success, but the film it self was considered failed. Scorsese fell into depression because of the failure. He even had serious cocaine addict at that time. However, his close friend, Robert de Niro, encouraged him and he finally managed his comeback in "Raging Bull" (1980). This film received eight Oscar nominations and won 2 categories. In this film also, Scorsese received his first Oscar nomination for the Best Director category. Ever since, Scorsese produced Oscar quality movies, or in other words, almost all of his film received Oscar nomination. Those films include, "Goodfellas" (1990), "The Age of Innocence" (1993), "Gangs of New York" (2002), "The Aviator" (2004), and many more.

C. Roland Barthes' Semiotic Theory

Popular study is to reveal signs that are endowed by the popular culture products. Therefore, to reveal the signs we need a tool. In this research, the researcher applied Roland Barthes' semiotic theory. This theory was considered to be the most appropriate tool because Roland Barthes himself applied this theory in analyzing the signs of French popular culture product as he wrote in his book entitled *Mythologies* (1972). He has given the example of how semiotic is used to reveal the signs of a popular culture product. In this book, Barthes explained that myth (metalanguage, or in other words, signification) is the correlation between the popular culture product (form) and the message carried by the popular culture product (the concept). He has applied this theory to French popular culture product so it is easier for us to understand.

In one article of his book, *Myth Today*, Barthes did not directly state the idea about semiotic, instead, he began with the introduction about myth. Myth in this term is different from myth in Ancient Greek, which is defined as stories about nature, human, and God or Goddess. Here, Barthes explained, myth is a system of communication, it is a type of speech (Barthes translated by Lavers, 1999: 109). It means that myth is a way to communicate something or message. Nevertheless, not any kind of language can be a myth. A language can become a myth if it carries or contains a message. However, myth is not only in the form of language.

Everything can be a myth provided if it carries a message (Barthes translated by Lavers, 1999: 109). A red rose is an ordinary flower, but in terms of love or lover, a red rose means passions.

Semiology is a science of forms since it studies significations apart from their content (Barthes translated by Lavers, 1999: 111). Thus, myth as a semiological system also has tri-dimensional pattern, as shown in the picture bellow:



As it can be seen, the first semiotic order is the language-object (the form). It is called language object because it has a form or can be seen. It can be in form of language or object. While the second order is the myth itself or called metalanguage (Barthes translated by Lavers, 1999: 115). Myth exists when a language-object (form), or in second order of semiotic called signifier, carries a message (concept) or in second order of semiotic called signified. The correlation between form and concept, then, results in a signification.

The characteristic of myth is to transform a meaning into a form (Barthes translated by Lavers, 1999: 131). In other words, myth uses language or object but sometimes it goes to the deeper meaning, for

example, the picture of a Negro in French uniform saluting the French flag. Barthes stated, the picture carries a message that the French imperialism is not only tied to the native French race, but to all races in the world since French imperality has a history of colonial adventures. Therefore, we can say that the correlation between the picture of a Negro French soldier saluting the three colors (the form) and the message (the concept) results in the myth of French imperialism power (the signification). It is only a picture, but when the picture carries a message, it has a deeper meaning.

In this research, the form is the ritual (The 79th Annual Academy Award Nights). The ritual carried the concepts or messages (the beliefs and values). Here, we will find out what messages are endowed by the ritual and how the ritual and the concept correlate, and produce myth. However, there is no eternal myth. It evolves as human history and the society evolve. Therefore, there are ancient myths but no eternal ones. As Barthes said that, it is human history which coverts reality into speech and it alone rules the life and the death of mythical language (Barthes translated by Lavers, 1999: 110).

D. American Myths, Beliefs and Values in Popular Culture

Culture in America can be divided into three parts, Elite Culture, Folk Culture, and Popular Culture. Among these types of culture, as it implied from its name, Popular Culture has the largest community. As Nachbar and Lause said in their book, *Popular Culture: An Introductory Text*, that “Popular culture is the products of human work and thought which are (or have been) accepted and approved of by a large community or population.” (1992: 14). It means that something can be called as a popular culture if it is approved and accepted by a community.

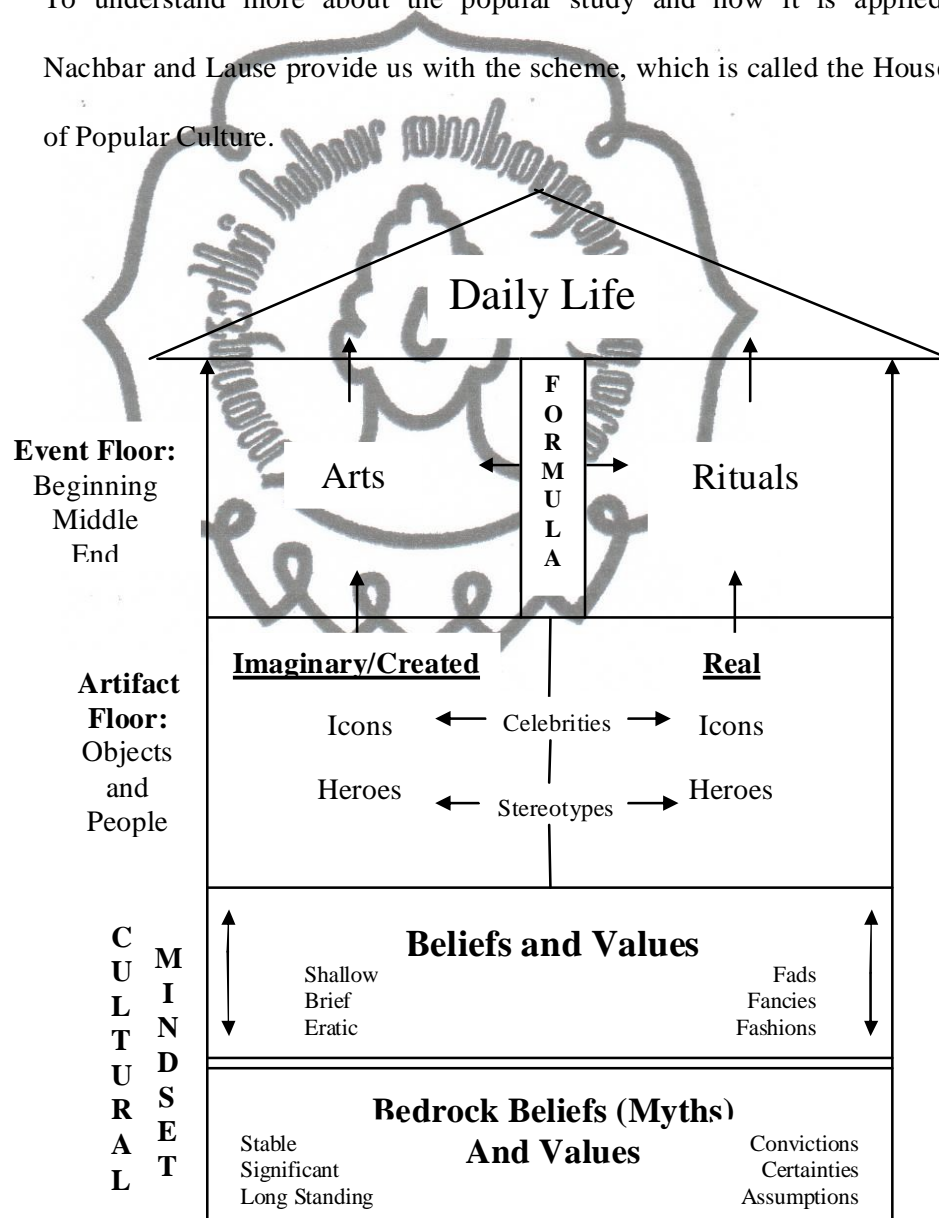
During the approval and acceptance process, people willingly choose whether they want to accept a popular culture product or not. When people decide to accept a popular culture product, it can be concluded that the product reflects their experience, belief and want. The greater popularity of the popular culture product, the more reflective it will be. The greater popularity means more people choose the product in order to fulfill their need or want. They choose it willingly because it implies some of their beliefs and values. Therefore, the more society members choose a popular culture product, the more the product reflects the beliefs and values in that society.

Popular culture reflects and molds beliefs and values that are so deeply embedded that their truth is assumed rather than proven. The study of popular culture brings these assumed-to-be-true beliefs and values to the surface and into the light of day – reflected in our mirrors, refracted through our lenses.

(Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 9)

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Since beliefs and values cannot be seen in popular culture study, in order to describe and understand a society, we examine artifacts or events that express the beliefs and values hidden below. We can describe a society through a popular culture product because they choose it willingly. To understand more about the popular study and how it is applied, Nachbar and Lause provide us with the scheme, which is called the House of Popular Culture.



(Nachbar and Lause, 1992 : 21)

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From the scheme above we can see that our object of research is the 79th Annual Academy Award, which is an event or ritual of American Popular Culture. It is a part of popular culture that people see and exist in our daily life. Every ritual has its own formula, icons, heroes, and stereotypes. By examining those parts, we can find the bedrock beliefs (myths) and values hidden bellow, and through the myths we can understand the society.

The basement of the house is divided into two parts. The first, which is closer to the surface, is beliefs and values. Meanwhile, the second part, which lays deep down in the foundation of the house is the bedrock beliefs (myths) and values. Beliefs and values are located deep down in the basement because they form the cultural mindset. They cannot be seen and exist in the mind of the individual members of the society. Nevertheless, the beliefs and values are very important since they are the foundation and the reason why people choose a cultural item as a popular culture.

The term 'myth' here does not concern with 'true' or 'false' of any beliefs or values. It only concerns with the significance and long lasting of a belief or value to the mindset of people and that is widely accepted or being true (Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 84). Since the circumstances of our lives constantly change, the beliefs and values also constantly change as the society evolves. Although the study of popular culture is not limited only in present time, there is no eternal myth. In popular culture study, it is not important whether or not a specific beliefs

and values are true or false. Here, we concern in determining what people believe to be true and in exploring the ways these beliefs are expressed and discussed (Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 23).

In American society, we can find so many myths, beliefs and values as their cultural mindset. Many of them have stand for hundreds of years. One of them is the myth of America as a special nation. American people believe that they are the special nation that is predestined to be 'a city upon a hill'. An example or a model of what a nation should be. This idea firstly came up to public in a sermon by John Winthrop in Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630. Here, Winthrop said that this new nation had a responsibility to bring peace, and equality of rights to all nations. In other words, America has a burden to guide other nations to be better. This value is passed down from the Puritan era until nowadays.

In its journey of time, this belief evolves as the society evolves. The early settlements deeply believed that their existence in this New Land was a fulfillment of God's promises. The Puritan believed that America is the New Kanaan. They were sure that the Lord had called them to 'be fruitful and multiply' and especially to have dominion over the earth (Luedtke, 1992: 401). It is also known as manifest destiny. Therefore, they applied this belief based on the Puritan religious interpretation.

A few decades later, the Enlightenment figures, such as Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and others tried to put this idea into greater meaning. Not only based on biblical value systems but also based on

political and social values. This idea became more universal, not only for Puritan society but also for all American society. The belief of America as 'a city upon a hill' then, was being interpreted as 'America is the only valid social or government structure'. Since then American society holds this belief tightly. The success of political campaign, which uses this belief as its issue, is an example of the existence of this myth among American society.

Another myth that existed since the era of early settlement is the myth of Endless Abundance. This belief is supported by the natural condition of the new land. The early settlers found that America was a very fertile land with various natural conditions. It also had enormous amount of natural sources that could be use to fulfill their need. Therefore, they believed that they would never run out of anything they need to survive and more over to prosper, even though they did so many exploration and exploitation.

This belief evolves through time. In the early days, frontier kept this belief and used it as a foundation for westward movement. They exploited the natural sources as if it would never run out. They opened a very wide area of forest and used it as a plantation. They hunted animals not only for their meat but also for their fur. People also often hunt the animal only for entertainment or for sport. People did not exploit and explore the natural sources only for their daily need but also to earn money. The Pilgrim in New England for example, they cultivated the land

and earn money from trading corn, woods, and fur. The Virginia Company also a good example of it. They successfully mutated tobacco seed from west India and American weed and exported it to Europe.

Since the rapid occupation of wilderness and the coming of industrialization, the myth of endless abundance was not only seen in the way people explored and exploit the natural sources. It also can be seen from the trend of consumerism and the popularity of disposable items and instant products. As Nachbar and Lause said that believing in endless abundance encourages a related belief that convenience is a virtue (1992: 126). As a result, the popularity of disposable items and instant products were rising.

The size also becomes an important consideration, bigger is better. In the late 1990's fast food became profitable business. Big Mac and large size of French fries became very popular and Mac Donald gained enormous profit from it. Plastic also became favorites in industrial and daily use for its practicality and efficiency. Besides, people feel more comfortable in using plastic product because they do not bother to keep and take care of it. They can simply throw it into the garbage after using it and get the new one.

Another excess of this belief is the rise of consumerism. It can be seen from the use of credit card by the society. Most of American has at least one credit card to fulfill their need. One episode of Oprah Winfrey's Show even shows how American people buy things more than they can

afford because they are able to do so by using credit card. This condition later brought more debt to the person and now it became one of the reasons of America's Economic Crisis.

Myth of Endless Love also cannot be separated from American social life. We can find this theme in most of Hollywood movies and also in songs that fill the Billboard charts. As the Puritan believes that human's duty on earth is to multiply and to have dominion on earth (Genesis 1: 28). Marriage is the only legal institution, according to church and society at that time, for man and woman to fulfill this duty. Puritan regarded love between man and woman as a legitimate reason for marriage (Kile in Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 153). Therefore, Puritan believes that God has already created a perfect man for each woman, and vice versa. This value has become the core of the myth of endless love.

According to Puritan ethic, love between man and woman is an image of love within human and God. Any idea of sexuality and exoticism is a part of Paganism and Atheism. Therefore, romantic passion and lust are not accepted by the society at that time. This can be seen from the literature and work of art at that time. Most of the poems, essays, sermons and narratives at that time were written with daily life theme, adventures, religious, and political theme. Only few writers used love theme in their works such as, Thomas Hariot in fact or fiction narratives 'Pocahontas' and the first American book published in England, a book of poems, by Anne Bradstreet. The lack of love theme in American literature ended in

The Romantic period (1820 – 1860), when Victorian Romanticism started to have influence in American literature. This also leads the relationship between man and woman and the marriage to secularization.

The myth of endless love itself is unconsciously planted in American people's mind, especially the girls, since they are in a very young age. It is reflected through their toys, such as Barbie, the bed time fairy tale stories, and cartoon such as the Disney's production of Beauty and the Beast, and also Cinderella. In their early adults they are faced by the love theme in almost all Hollywood movies, celebrities' love stories that can be seen everyday in magazines and even news, and in songs that they hear and sing every time. This myth is deeply rooted in their mind so they unconsciously look for the perfect mate and their own romantic love story as they found in fairy tale or Hollywood movies. This becomes one reason of why the number of divorce and break-up couple increase. They see divorce and break-up as a process of finding their true love. The romantic idea is still believed by the American people until now.

As Nachbar and Lause said that one complexity of myth is each myth and its associated beliefs and values is related to other myths (1992: 99). Myth of endless love is related to other myth which is myth of nuclear family. The myths are related since, according to the Puritan ethic, love between man and woman should be legalized by marriage and blessed by the church. The myth of nuclear family as stated by Nachbar and Lause in his book as follows:

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HOUSE OF THE NUCLEAR FAMILY

Myth : The nuclear family (Dad, Mom, 2.5 kids and Pet(s)) is the basic and most desirable American family unit.

Beliefs and Values :

Everybody should be married.

Divorce is a “failure”

Family values are the most valuable American values.

Icons:

Family home

Family photograph album

The dinner table

Heroes:

The Huxtables.

Laura Ingalls Wilder (Little House on the Prairie).

Celebrities:

The Judds

The Osmonds

Stereotypes:

“Old maids” (negative)

The “New Male” (Domesticated and sensitive)
(Positive)

Rituals:

Family vacations

Family dinners

Arts:

Family Ties (TV)

Roots.

(Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 95 – 96)

Nevertheless, by the early of nineteenth century this myth is no longer relevant in American society. The changes of some values in the society cause the changes of family values. Since the industrialization came to America and the decline of American economic condition at that time, the orientation of family values has changed. Woman is not only a partner in domestic field for a man but also expected to give contribution in family economy. Because of this condition, woman's orientation is not only to the family but also to fulfill the economic needs of the family. The lack of time that they share together as a family later brings a new

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perspective of marriage. Some people still held the Puritan value of family, and some others come to the new perspective of marriage. They no longer consider having descendant as the ultimate purpose of marriage, but now they see marriage as a way to fulfill their need of companion and sharing their feeling. The late timing of marriage and the emergence of contraception support this change. They do not see divorce and break-up as a failure but consider it as a process in finding their true love.

The other ancient American myth is the myth of hard work or myth of success. Here, the Americans believe that hard work leads to good fortune which in turn results in money or fame or power for the virtuous individual (Nachbar and Lause, 1992: 95). This myth is passed down from the early settlers to nowadays American society. The early settler, especially the Puritan, believe that God has given them a fertile land and plenty of natural sources. They only need to cultivate it and explore it. It was proven in the second year of their existence in the New Land. First time they came to the New Land hunger and disease caused a great lost in their colony. The Indian were very helpful in teaching them how to survive in this New Land. They planted corn and bred chicken and other cattle. By the next fall the crops and cattle were plentiful so that they could earn money from it besides using it to fulfill their daily need. They sold their product to Europe. Therefore lots of European saw that if they wanted to work hard in America they would find fortune. In the years a

head more immigrants came to the New Land in searching of the American Dream.

The measurement of success itself evolves through time. In the early period, people were called successful if they had wide plantation and great house. Later, in civil war era the measurement was how many slaves they had. In industrial era success was seen by how much money they had and the fulfillment of their need. By the late 20th century, people were called successful if they had more money, had power in any aspect of life. Nowadays, the measurements of success are not only seen from the possession or the power someone has but a person can be called successful if he/she is famous. The desire to be famous can be seen from the popularity of talent search TV programs and reality shows, such as American Idol, America's Next Top Model, etc.

Another American popular myth is the myth of beauty. This myth is very dynamic because it changes and develops from time to time. The concept of beauty itself is different from one era to another. In 1500's to 1700's the ideal female body image is the pear shape. The condition that required women to work in field and barnyard create this ideal image. The necessity of field work made a large and muscular physique ideal. The average woman at this era had more than three children. Therefore, large hip is sign of fertility.

In early 1800's, corset became women's best friend. They wore corset to make their waist very tiny. The indoor life style also made them

pale and look weak. Small feet and rosebud lips also became the image of ideal woman's body. Mid of 1800's the use of corset became controversial because of restrictiveness and it might affect women's health in a long term. As a result, curve body with big hips became the ideal image of female body at that time. Paintings and photographs showed this trend. The painting done by artist Pierre Aguste Renoir, The Bathers (1887) is an example of it.



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(4th April, 2009; 11.04)

In early 1900's, women started to pay attention to their body and make up. The first bra was patented in 1913 and women started to bind their breasts to gain boyish figure. Comfort and freedom became priorities at that time and bobbed hair style became very popular. Along side to the self consciousness of female toward their body, the first Miss America pageant was held in 1921. In 1950's, Marilyn Monroe influenced the ideal body image of women with her curved body and large breast. In this period

shaven armpits and legs started to become popular. A decade later, American society welcomed Twiggy Lawson a super model with her ultra slim or underweight body. This was the first time in American society that an underweight woman became the standard for the ideal body image. Fitness and aerobic exercise became very popular at this period (Kendal, [http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/co / nn991006 .html](http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/co....nn991006.html) (September 16th, 2007; 05.01 pm)).

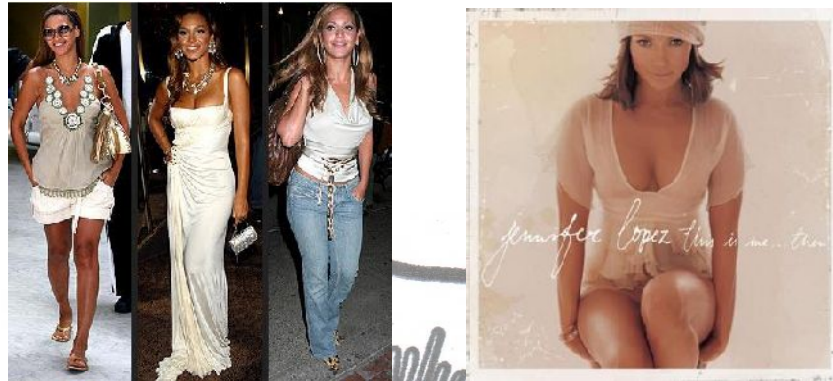


<http://www.floridaestateplanninglawyerblog.com/MarilynMonroe-thumb.jpg> (29th November, 2009; 01.15 pm)



<http://misscleofashion.files.wordpress.com/2009/05/twiggy03.jpg> (2nd November, 2009; 01.08 pm)

Julia Robert and Sandra Bullock became the standard of beauty in early 90's. Women were faced with the skinny body and flat boobs. This trend was also supported with the existence of super models such as Cindy Crawford, Claudia Shiffer and Naomi Campbell. By the end of 90's, artists like Jennifer Lopez, Catherine Zeta Jones and Beyonce Knowless replaced the previous icons of beauty. They set a new standard of beauty that was curve toned body with tone skin. Those celebrities also set the new concept of sexy.



http://img2.timeinc.net/people/i/2006/gallery/bestworstdresspoll/beyonce_knowles.jpg (29th November, 2009; 01.10 pm)

http://2.bp.blogspot.com/_ot0AEI8diYE/SFe4azFdZ-I/AAAAAAAAACU/P39hoorKf_c/s400/jlo-this%2Bis%2Bme...then.jpg (29th November, 2009; 01.20 pm)

By the early 21st century, the ideal image of beauty not only required thin but also young. Celebrities like Lindsay Lohan, Paris Hilton, etc became trendsetter in any fashion magazines. Cosmetics and anti aging and wrinkle products became very popular and became number one in chart. The more extreme excess of this trend was the rising demand of plastic surgery as one of beauty treatments. They, who did not want to take any plastic surgery but yet want to look younger, could take the botox injection that could make their face tighter and erase wrinkles from their face. Women tended to do everything in order to become beautiful no matter what it cost. They often did it in order to get their own self satisfaction and moreover to gain other people's attention.

E. Celebrity in American Society

Every culture has its own celebrity. It differs from one culture to another. Hundreds years ago the celebrities were the royal family and the nobility. While today, the celebrities are the entertainers. To decide who deserves to be called celebrity, we need to understand what celebrity is. Celebrity is an individual whose represents people's or a group of people's desires, hopes, fears, and dreams (Schut, <http://www.twu.ca/academics/faculty/...html> (22nd November, 2009; 08.15 pm)). Celebrity seems to fulfill people's fantasy of fame and fortune. Celebrity also became a perfect example of what is accepted.

On one side people saw them as ordinary persons who have ordinary life just like most of people. People could find celebrities having 'normal' problems, such as failed marriage, economic problem, struggle from disease, problems with their lovers, etc. in television programs and articles in magazines or internet. Therefore, people feel some kind of 'intimacy' and connected to celebrities. They want to know about celebrities' lives in the same way they would do to a close friend. They begin to relate to celebrities as 'someone they know' although they have never met them. Then, slowly but sure the eagerness to know the celebrities' lives became an obsession.

On the other side, people are aware that celebrities live in a world of dream. In the same magazines where people find celebrities facing their daily problem, they could also find celebrities toting a Bulgary bag and

wrapped in a \$ 15.000 couture gown. On one hand people know that this was a kind of life that they could never afford to. Nevertheless, they see it as a way to get satisfaction for themselves and acceptance from the society. By getting to know the celebrities' lives people also could escape from their routine everyday life. Instead facing the rising debt, the unsatisfied marriage and kids, they could turn their attention to celebrities' life and they often felt better in doing so.

For the reasons above, people are inescapable from being obsessed toward celebrity. In ancient Greece and Rome, people created gods and goddess as the example of perfect persons, an idol, or how a human should be. In this modern era, people look for this perfect image on celebrities. People tend to build up a perfect image and then observe celebrities' every move and look to expose its every part in order to reach the perfection. The media keep this idea and apply it in the industry.

We can not ignore that everyday the media build the celebrities characters through gossips, photos, and interviews whether in magazines or talk shows. Consumption of media is not a small activity in America, or the rest of countries in the world. TV, magazines, movies, advertisements, and internet are dominant in daily lives. What people see and hear everyday and every time slowly but sure builds their opinion about what they believe to be true, what is good and what is not. Media give what we want and desire, so it is not a surprise if people end in this 'celebrity obsessed syndrome'.

The teenagers are the most affected by this phenomenon. It happens because they see fame as a cure for all problems. Fame gives them the opportunity to get wealth and success. They are aware that by looking like the celebrities they can get others attention and acceptance, since they are on the phase of searching self identity. They also see the famous person capacity to influence social change, for example, when Julia Roberts was given the opportunity to become the Ambassador of WWF or Arnold Schwarzenegger won in governors' election simply because he was famous and people felt to know their character. It gives them the impulse to copy celebrity life.

The obsession toward celebrities can be seen from the increasing number of gossip magazines and the higher demand of it. People are eager to know the latest celebrities' information, so that they would not miss the latest trend. Information about celebrities can easily be found. People only need to log on the internet, or buy the gossip magazines, and we even can find celebrities' news in CNN. Today, most of magazines dedicate at least two pages for celebrity info. Celebrity appears everywhere from television program, magazine's covers, advertisements, movies, billboard, etc. The information about celebrity is not only on their carrier and daily life, but mostly about what they are wearing. Some magazines even specially serve regularly and completely of what celebrity wears with its detail info of where can they get thing and how much the cost is. Since celebrity is a model of what is accepted and the standard of fortune, people tend to

imitate celebrity. In some series of Oprah Winfrey Show, there are groups of teenagers addicted to buy expensive things that celebrities have although they might not afford it. The other girls do extreme diet and even plastic surgery in order to reach zero sized body and to look like their idols.

Nevertheless, obsess toward celebrity could be inspiring. By knowing celebrity's life stories could give people inspiration and help them solve their problems. Celebrities also motivate people to reach the higher goal in their life, for example, Oprah Winfrey suffered through poverty, sexual abuse and racial discrimination to become the wealthiest woman in media. Thus, we can see that celebrity nowadays taking an important role in American society's life and in the way they hold their beliefs and values.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS

A. Myths Reflected in The 79th Annual Academy Award

The Annual Academy Award has evolved through time. From the awarding night to the broadcasting system has changed. However, the enthusiasm and interest of the society toward this event is not decreasing but increasing from day to day. For example, the 78th Annual Academy Award was watched by 76.6 million viewers in America only, not including viewers abroad. It shows that this event is popular among the Americans and the society accepts the ritual because it reflects some of their beliefs and values. The American myths, beliefs and values that were reflected in the 79th Annual Academy Award were:

1. Myth of Material Success

Since the Puritan era, American people believe that wealth and power are the sign of success. While nowadays, in American society, fame is also a sign of success. The American people believe that through hard work, they will find wealth, fame and power in return. This myth of material success also can be seen in every parts and steps of the 79th Annual Academy Award Night ceremony. From the preparation phase, the Red Carpet, the Academy Award nominees and especially the winner, the Judging process of the award, the bestowed of the award to the winner, to the icon of the Academy Award itself

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reflected the myth of material success and the belief of hard work. Therefore, it can be said, the most dominant myth that can be seen in the 79th Annual Academy Award Night Ceremony was the myth of material success.

The belief of hard work and the myth of material success could be seen in the 79th Annual Academy Award night especially at the preparation stage. The preparation itself was not only done by the Academy of Motion Picture, Art and Scientist (or also known as AMPAS) members, staffs, and crews, but also done by the guests of the Academy Award and the media. The hard work was also reflected in the way the Oscar statues were made, which was done with carefulness and very focusing to the statues' details. All of the hard work of everyone involved were paid off by the success of the ceremony.

Therefore, because of the hard work and dedication of all the people who were involved in the ceremony, this ceremony became the most prominent award ceremony and also known as the most glamorous award ceremony in the world. The winners of the 79th Annual Academy Award were also reflecting the myth of material success. The more detailed information about how the myth of success was reflected by the 79th Annual Academy Award Night Ceremony is given in the next part of the analysis.

2. Myth of Beauty

Beauty in these days is associated with the physical appearance. Although the myth of beauty and the standard of beauty are constantly changing, the celebrities take an important role in determining the standard of beauty. Moreover, nowadays, celebrities have become the trendsetter and the icon of beauty. People would always look up to the celebrity, whenever and where ever they are seen. People tend to imitate celebrities' style because the society has already accepted it.

The 79th Annual Academy Award was the prominent ceremony where the guests and the performers appeared in their best performance. Since there were lots of media made a report of the ceremony and it was also telecast in around the world, therefore, everyone who were involved in that ceremony wanted to look their best. The well known house of fashion and their fashion designers would not miss the chance to get involved in this ceremony. The designers would send their latest creation for the guest and the performers of the ceremony. Some of them gave the items and some of them were only borrowed the items to the Academy.

Since the ceremony was broadcast to all over the world, the guest and the performers wanted to look perfect in that ceremony. To look perfect in their designers' gown, the celebrities, especially the

girls, should have the perfect body shape. To look great in this occasion the celebrities needed lots of preparation.



(<http://www.fadedyouthblog.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/02/who-owns-the-red-carpet-80th-annual-academy-awards.jpg>; June 10, 2010, 05.57 pm.)

As we can see in the picture above that to look great in the designer's gown, the celebrities had to have slim and curved body. To get that kind of body was not an easy task, the celebrities had to work hard for it. The celebrities needed months to prepare for this occasion. To shape their body, the celebrities had to do a lot of body exercise. They also had their own trainer in order to get the perfect shape of body as they wanted. Moreover, the celebrities also had to do diets in order to get the maximum result. All of those things should be done by the celebrities to get the perfect look for the Oscar red carpet.

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Therefore, they became the standard of beauty and this is also why the 79th Annual Academy Award Night reflected the myth of beauty. The more broad explanation of how this myth was reflected by the 79th Annual Academy Award is given in the next part of the analysis.

3. Myth of Endless Abundance

In the 79th Annual Academy Award, the myth of material success and the myth of beauty were also correlated to the myth of endless abundance. Everyone wants not only to be accepted but also to be respected by other persons in the society. Therefore, they have to meet the society's standard to be accepted. Since the standard of beauty and also the standard of success are high, most people look for the fastest way to reach the standard. Some people think that they will be accepted and respected by the society only by up-dating and following the latest trend. Therefore, they will buy things that celebrities wear even though they do not need it and even though they cannot afford it. So did in the 79th Annual Academy Award.

The high expectation of the society toward celebrity made the celebrity set the high standard of success and beauty. It was shown in the way the celebrities and the guests of the 79th Annual Academy Award Night wore their clothes, gowns and jewelries. The lifestyle of the celebrities and the guests was also giving huge contribution to the way the society defined 'success'. Therefore, to keep up with the high standard, the celebrities and the guest derived to the belief that

consumerism is okay, because the things they bought even when they did not need it showed that they were successful persons. It explained how in the 79th Annual Academy Award Night the myth of material success, myth of beauty and the myth of endless abundance correlated to each other.

The 79th Annual Academy Award Red Carpet combined the elements of the standard of beauty and the standard of material success, which were the celebrities, the high-end wardrobe and the fancy and branded things. Therefore, celebrities at this ceremony were considered as the trendsetters. Most people were thought that by following the trend and having newest and branded things which was owned by the celebrities, the society would accept and respect them. The items that were owned by the celebrities were not the common items which could be afforded by most of people. The celebrity's lifestyle was considered to be exclusive and money wasting, therefore, not all people afford to have this kind of life style.

Since most people are eager to be accepted and respected by the society, they will do whatever it takes to reach the society's standard of beauty and success. Most people will prefer the fastest way to reach it without giving much effort. Certain people will buy the branded things that are worn by the celebrities which were seen in television or on magazines, even though they can not afford it. They will simply use the credit card without considering whether they can

pay the bill of the credit card or not. This tendency shows the belief that new is always better and to be consumerist is not a problem, which are the values and beliefs of the myth of endless abundance.

The celebrities' life style was also reflecting the myth of endless abundance. For their hard work in a film project, they will be paid such amount of money which they used to buy houses, fancy things, and many more. As a privilege, the celebrities also receive the latest goods, gadget, or product from factories, shops, or house of mode as a way for advertising the newest products. The celebrities are very effective to advertise the new product because they are considered as the trendsetter, therefore, people tend to follow their style and buy things that celebrities have. In this case, people thought that to be consumerist is not a problem, because by being consumerist and buy the newest thing that become the trend, even when they are not needed, can make them accepted and respected by other people in the society. The way this myth was reflected by the 79th Annual Academy Award Night is given in the next part of the analysis

4. Myth of Romantic Love

Myth of romantic love was also reflected by the 79th Annual Academy Award Night. It can be seen at the Red Carpet session, where most of the guest came with their mate, which, in Academy Award Night ceremony, is known as the Oscar Date. People and the media are eagerly to know who will come to the ceremony and who

are their partner. The celebrities' love stories are very interesting to follow. Moreover, for certain people, the celebrities love story is the reflection of the fairy tale story. The celebrities are the nowadays prince and princess, or princess and knight, or the manifestation of the center characters in the fairy tale's love story, as mentioned in their bedtime stories.

Although myths, beliefs and values of the society are evolving through time, the society, especially the girls and women, still hold the myth of romantic love. The girls are still looking for their perfect mate as the knight or prince character in their bedtime stories. If they do not find the perfect character from their spouse or the spouse have flaw, then they will consider that their spouse is not their true love. If it is so, they will leave the spouse by divorce or break up, then they will search their perfect mate. Over all, the celebrities and their Oscar date are the reflection of the myth of romantic love, which says that for each individual there is a single perfect partner, who will make their life complete. In the next part of the analysis, the writer provides more example and explanation of it.

B. The Way 79th Annual Academy Award Reflects American Myths, Beliefs and Values

As it is explained above that every part of The 79th Annual Academy Award Nights reflected the American myths, beliefs and values. From the preparations, the judges and the judging process, the red carpet, the awarding, the winners, to the Oscar statue itself reflects the society's myths, beliefs and values, that is why The Annual Academy Award was very popular among the American society and remain to be the most prominent award in American film industry. For more explanation of how and in what way the 79th Annual Academy Award reflects the American myths, beliefs and values, it can be seen in the explanation below:

1. The Academy Award Preparation

The 79th Annual Academy Award Night was celebrated for only three hours and forty two minutes, but the preparation took months. The preparations of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS) and the actors or actress to held and attended his ceremony were enormous.

The preparation of the AMPAS itself as the host of the Academy Award was started in November 2006, when the campaign for Academy Award nomination began. The race to be Oscar nominees was not only dominated by big studios, but also followed by independent distributors. Late of December 2006, the Academy started

to send the ballot paper to the AMPAS' members, here is where the voting began. The Academy members had to decide who would be the Academy nominees from all the movies that have been sent to them. The Academy members determine the nominees according to their branch, the actors determined nominees for Best Actor, the directors for the Best Director, and so on. During this process, any advertisements and sponsors were not allowed, in order to maintain the credibility of the voting result.

In another place, the Oscar statues were carefully made and prepared for this special occasion. The manufacturer cast 50 Oscar statues without knowing the exact number of the statues will be given in the 79th Annual Academy Award. It was because the possibility of double voting winner. And as in the previous year, any surplus award will be housed in Academy until next year event. The statuettes were made in Chicago by the manufacturer, R.S. Owens. As Noreen Prohaska, the spoke person of R.S. Owens said, that it was their first project in that year and also the most prestigious, and although they could do it quicker, they took three or four weeks to cast 50 statuettes because they did it to meet the perfection in each statue they made (<http://www.oscar.com/legacy/?pn=statuette> , 16th November 2009, 01.00 pm). They even handled the statuettes with white gloves. It shows that the Oscar statues were carefully handled to reach the perfection. The production of the Oscar statuettes itself also reflected

the myth of succes. The carefulness in producing the statues resulted in the glamorous look of the Oscar statue.

The preparation of the AMPAS for the 79th Annual Academy Award Night was not only in determining the nominees and the statuettes, but also in preparing the ceremony itself. The Academy staffs were responsible for the success of this ceremony. They set the concept of the ceremony until the very detailed component of the ceremony. In order to arrange the ceremony, they chose a producer to handle the ceremony. For the 79th Annual Academy Award they choose Laura Ziskin as the producer. Laura Ziskin was the executive producer of "Pretty Women", "As Good As It Gets", "D.O.A.", "Spiderman", and many others.

The preparation of the Academy Award Night was taken into seriously. From the broadcast coverage to the decoration of the Kodak theatre was carefully designed. The Academy staff and crew worked very hard for this ceremony. It is shown in the pictures below:



<http://emol.org/film/archives/academyawards/2007/behindthescenes.html>
(26th October 2009, 03.45 pm.)

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<http://www.viewimages.com/Search.aspx?mid=73422647&epmid=3&partner=Google> (26th October 2009, 02.30 pm.)

From the pictures above it can be seen that preparation is a very important step in this ceremony. The Academy staffs and crews were giving their full attention to the details of the ceremony's components in order to reach the perfection for this ceremony. They carefully organized and put into order the components of the ceremony, from the red carpets, the statues, the cameras, and others. Therefore, the audience could feel the glam and the prestige of the 79th Annual Academy Award Night.

The preparation of the Academy Award crews and staffs in preparing the 79th Annual Academy Award also reflects the myth success. The Academy staffs and crews had to manage and prepared the ceremony very well because the Annual Academy Award is known as the prominent and glamorous event to celebrate the hard

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work of people who are involved in film industry. They had to manage the concept of the ceremony to the details of the decoration in order to manifest the spirit of the ceremony itself.



Dennis Mancini is preparing Oscar statues before he sprays on another coat of gold paint. (<http://theenvelope.latimes.com/awards/oscar/env-07oscarprep-pg,0,7070020.photogallery?index=2>; April 20, 2010, 02.28 pm.)

Workers from American Turf and Carpet position the red colored carpet down Hollywood Blvd. under a canopy because of the threat of rain on Thursday (<http://emol.org/film/archives/academyawards/2007/behindthescenes.html>; (April 20, 2010, 02.30 pm.)



79th Academy Awards director Louis J. Horivitz (left) and Jean Hersolt Award honoree Sherry Lansing at rehearsals for the Academy Awards® for outstanding film achievements of 2006 (<http://www.viewimages.com/Search.aspx?mid=73422647&epmid=3&partner=Google>; 20th April 2010, 02.34 pm.)



Academy President Sid Ganis (left) and writer Bruce Vilanch went on radio tour to discuss the 79th Oscar® telecast (<http://www.viewimages.com/Search.aspx?mid=73422647&epmid=3&partner=Google>; 20th April 2010, 02.36 pm.)

From the pictures above it can be seen that preparing the 79th Annual Academy Award needs a lot of hard work. As it seen from the
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picture above, the preparation was not only done in a few days before the ceremony but it took months. The preparation was not only done only by the crews and the staffs, but also by the Academy President itself, Sid Ganis, who went on radio tour to discuss the Annual Academy Award Night, and to know what people expected from the ceremony. The preparation itself was a process to reach the perfection of the ceremony.

The preparation for the 79th Annual Academy Award Night was not only done by the AMPAS, as the host of the show itself, but also by the guests of the ceremony. The preparation for the Oscar Night cannot be done in one or two days only. The guests, especially the celebrities, had to prepare everything to get a perfect look in the ceremony. From their speeches, if they won the award, their body shape, their look, and especially their make up and outfit. They considered it because they realized that they would become the center of the attention in the occasion. Therefore, besides reflecting the myth of success, the preparation stage of the 79th Annual Academy Award Night also reflected the myth of beauty.

To look perfect in the Academy Award Night needs lots of effort. The celebrities had to do the sport exercises, diets, from the specific diet to the extreme diet, and lots of body treatment. Skin and face treatments were a must in order to get the perfect look in this

occasion. The celebrities, especially the actors and actresses needed extra effort in this case, since they were burdened with high expectation to look perfect in front of their fans. Moreover if they had been joining a movie project, they had to switch fast from their role in a movie to their own image. For example, Renee Zellweger, after gaining weight up to 25 pound in her role as Bridget in “*Bridget Jones’s Diary*” she had to loose more than 20 pounds in order to look perfect in her outfit. Other example is Forest Whitaker. In his role as Idi Amin in “*The Last King of Scotland*” Whitaker gained 50 pounds, and for looking great in his designer suit, he had to loose such amount of weight too.



Renee Zellweger in her film “*Bridget Jones’s Diary*”
(http://www.google.co.id/imgres?imgurl=http://farm3.static.flickr.com/2509/3731298803_3eb852ccc8_o.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.newz-blog.com/renee-zellweger-is-the-star/&usg=__bBhgmM48M7tZ4om_S6olxjcSj5w=&h=500&w=400&sz=108&hl=en&start=46&um=1&itbs=1&tbnid=rLHfdp2s6LwH1M:&tbnh=130&tbnw=104&prev=images%3Fq%3Dbridges%2Bjones%2Bdiary%2Bthe%2Bmovie%26start%3D40%26um%3D1%26hl%3Den%26sa%3DN%26ndsp%3D20%26tbs%3Disch:1; June 10, 2010, 04.44 pm.)



Renee Zellweger at the Academy Award's Red Carpet
(<http://www.marieclaire.com/celebrity-lifestyle/celebrities/exclusives/oscar-academy-award-fashion>; June 10, 2010, 05.13 pm.)



Forest Whitaker in his role as Idi Amin in *"The Last King of Scotland"*
(http://www.google.co.id/imgres?imgurl=http://www.proteinpower.com/drmike/wp-content/uploads/2007/02/forest-whitaker-blog-size.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.proteinpower.com/drmike/uncategorized/vegetarian-diets-and-obesity/&usg=__0hYedHYVRLsGgfoOv47l400rKKU=&h=600&w=417&sz=53&hl=en&start=128&um=1&itbs=1&tbnid=cV1HyQ_6V0JvLM:&tbnh=135&tbnw=94&prev=/images%3Fq%3Dforest%2Bwhitaker%2Blast%2Bking%2Bof%2Bscotland%26start%3D120%26um%3D1%26hl%3Den%26sa%3DN%26ndsp%3D20%26tbs%3Disch:1; June 10, 2010, 05.40 pm.)



Forest Whitaker and his wife in Academy Award's Red Carpet (<http://0.tqn.com/d/jewelry/1/0/D/D/whitaker.jpg>; June 10, 2010, 06.05 pm.)

All of the hard work in the preparation stage of the 79th Annual Academy Award night was the main component which defined the success of the occasion. The Academy staffs, crews, and the celebrities' hard work and attention to the detail of the ritual components resulted perfection and glam of the 79th Annual Academy Award Night.

2. The Red Carpet

The Red Carpet is the most anxiously waited session in The Annual Academy Award. Fans, media, and even the celebrities were very enthusiastic for this session. In this session fans could make direct interaction with their idols and saw their idols as “themselves” in the real world. The media took benefit from this session to capture the interaction between celebrities and fans, and interaction among the celebrities themselves. The media also used this session to gather information and news from the celebrities. For the celebrities, it is a chance to build their image through their appearance in public, pictures

and information captured by the media and their interaction with the other celebrities and fans.

Although the Oscar celebration started at 08.30 p.m., hundreds of people were found gathering at the sidewalk of Hollywood Boulevard at six a.m. Some even spent the night there just to see their idols for a glance. It showed how enthusiastic the people was in welcoming the 79th Annual Academy Award.



http://images.google.co.id/imgres?imgurl=http://blog.emerson.edu/Oscars2007/oscar_setup_022007.jpg&imgrefurl=http://blog.emerson.edu/Oscars2007/2007/02/&h=332&w=500&sz=116&hl=id&start=54&tbnid=huaKgdiY0EsFtM:&tbnh=86&tbnw=130&prev=/images%3Fq%3D79th%2Boscar%2Baward%26start%3D36%26gbv%3D2%26ndsp%3D18%26svnum%3D10%26hl%3Did%26sa%3DN (November 17, 2009, 03.56 pm.)

For the fans, it was a way to participate in this prestigious occasion. They felt very happy only by seeing their idols passing in front of them. It was a very rare moment to see the celebrities came together in one place, and they wanted to see, and if they could, join it as a prestigious moment in their life. Therefore, they were willing to

come to Hollywood Boulevard sidewalk at very early morning or even spent their night there in order to be able to see their idols at a glance.

For the celebrities, looking perfect in this occasion is a must. As we can see from the picture below that celebrities looked dazzling on the red carpet, with their slim body and designers' gown. For most people who saw it, it became the standard of beauty. Moreover, whether they realize it or not, it defines the myth of beauty among the society.



(http://www4.pictures.zimbio.com/bg/79th+Annual+Academy+Awards+611824VRCPxl.jpg?70225a1_wITHERSPoon_b_gr_1; 24th December 2009, 05.27 pm.)

Most people did not realize that to reach those perfect look needed lots of effort, and it did not as natural as they thought. The celebrities' appearance on the red carpet was not their everyday or normal look. It took lots of preparation to attend the ceremony. There were many things celebrities did to get their perfect look in Oscar's red carpet, from body exercise with personal trainers, specific diet to the extreme diet, intensive body, skin and face treatment, and so on.

The explanation above also can be seen in The 79th Annual Academy Award Red Carpet. For example, the Oscar winner, Helen

Mirren. Although she was 62 years old at that time, but she still looked dazzling on the red carpet. Mirren is gifted with beautiful face, but the red carpet look was not a gift. To maintain her beauty, Mirren has her own beauty and fashion consultants. She also had a team of make up artist to put on her make up, in order to get the red carpet look. Maintaining the body shape was not an easy task, she had personal trainer and daily routine exercise to get the perfect body shape. She also did diet in order to get beautiful skin and great body shape. All the hard work resulted in her dazzling look at the Oscar red carpet. She did it in order to meet the high standard of beauty as the expectation of the society.



AP / Kevrick Etienne/ an

(http://imgs.sfgate.com/c/pictures/2007/02/26/dd_Oscars_Arrivals_CAEB167.jpg; 24th December 2009, 07.05 pm.)

Since looking perfect was the main aim for the celebrities, they had to prepare everything, not only their body shape but also their make up, skin tone, and moreover, their outfit. For major celebrities, especially the Oscar's nominators, worrying about the outfit was not a necessary, since most of the well known designers would sent them some of their newest design that specially created for the occasion. For

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the designer it was their honor to be able to participate in this occasion. They also used it as a way to promote their product to the society, since this celebration was watched by millions of people not only in America but also from around the world. Nevertheless, they could not send their product as they pleased. The designer had to send their products to the costume department of the 79th Annual Academy Award first, and then the costume department would distribute it to certain celebrities. People in general would not give big attention to this situation. They only saw that the celebrity was the perfect example of what was ideal.



NICHELE KIDMAN wearing Balenciaga
(<http://oscar.com/oscar/night/redcarpet/?pn=gallery&a=1&g=0&i=49>; 26th Oktober 2008, 02.47 pm)

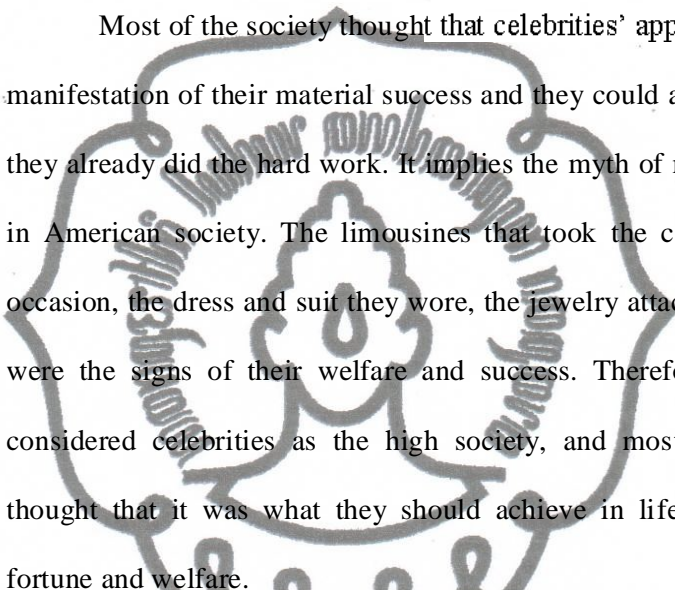


KIRSTEN DUNST is wearing a light blue tulle embroidered dress from the Chanel Spring/Summer 2007 Haute Couture Collection. Her vintage bracelet from Bulgari
(<http://oscar.com/oscar/night/redcarpet/?pn=gallery&g=0&i=29>; 26th Oktober 2008, 02.40 pm)

The appearance of the celebrities, for example those in the pictures above, is considered as one of the standard of success. Although some of the facilities were only borrowed and would be given back to the Academy when the ceremony was done, but people who saw them at the ceremony would consider it as the celebrity's life style, which was doing the hard work in their films production and

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therefore, they got fame and the fancy things and facilities as their reward. The appearance and belongings of the celebrities are also the manifestation of this myth. Therefore, people start to look up the celebrity's life style as the standard of success.



Most of the society thought that celebrities' appearance was the manifestation of their material success and they could afford it because they already did the hard work. It implies the myth of material success in American society. The limousines that took the celebrities to the occasion, the dress and suit they wore, the jewelry attach on their body were the signs of their welfare and success. Therefore, the society considered celebrities as the high society, and most of them even thought that it was what they should achieve in life, the fame, the fortune and welfare.

Willingly or not, the celebrities' appearance on the red carpet set a new standard of success and welfare. Some people even believe that if they look like the celebrities, they will become one of the members of the high society and they will achieve success among the society. Therefore, what celebrities wear become the must have things for them. For some people, having goods (clothes, jewelry, stuffs, etc) as celebrities have can lift up their social status. Although most people would not be able to afford the celebrities lifestyle, some of them did everything they can to get those goods.

In some cases, imitating the celebrities' lifestyle brought people to become more consumptive. The celebrities' lifestyle is an expensive lifestyle and most of people will not be able to keep up with it. They wear high-end designed clothes, toting branded bags, or use the latest and newest gadget which most people could not find in store yet, and the main thing that common people cannot have is that most of the celebrities have it without paying any money. Nowadays, celebrities become the most effective way to advertise a product. The rapid change of the trend, and not to mention every time celebrities shown in media, they always come up with new goods, make whoever tried to follow their lifestyle have to buy things even when they do not need it. Nowadays, whenever they cannot afford the goods in cash, they can use the credit card.

This tendency indicates the American myth of endless abundance. For whom who always keep up with the latest trend, they think that new is better and they buy things even when they did not need it. They buy it only for the prestige and not for the function. Credit cards are their best friend whenever they want to shop. They do not consider how much they pay for the goods and whether they can manage to pay the bill or not, the only thing they consider is if they do not have the same goods as the celebrities have people will underestimate them. One episode of Oprah Winfrey Shows revealed that American people spend more than 50 billion per year only on

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beauty products (*The Oprah Winfrey's Show*, broadcast on MetroTV, 24th August 2008). Shopping was their daily ritual and it also helps them to feel better. Therefore, it is not surprising if there are many people becoming shopaholic nowadays.

Discussing about Oscar red carpet, we cannot neglect the Oscar Date. On the red carpet session, fans and the media are eager to know who will come to the Oscar Night with whom. For common people, it is very interesting to keep an eye on celebrities' love life. A beautiful women wearing dazzling gown in a limousine will not be complete if she came to the Oscar by her own. Just as the prom night at the high school, we always expect girls or boys come to the party with his or her date. Whether they realize it or not, it goes hand in hand with the myth of romantic love in American society, which is said that for each individual there is a single perfect partner who, once found, makes the life complete and permanent happiness possible (Nachbar and Lause; 1992: 96). From this myth, it can be seen that although one person had everything in his/her life (successful in career, fame and fortune) but if the person does not have spouse, then his/her life would not complete yet.

People and the media are eagerly to know who will come to the Academy Award Night with whom. The celebrities love story is very interesting to be followed. Moreover, for certain people, the celebrities' love story is the reflection of the fairy tale story. The

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celebrities is the nowadays prince and princess or princess and knight, or the manifestation of the center characters in the fairy tale's love story, as it mention in their bedtime stories.



JOHN TRAVOLTA in a tuxedo by Giorgio Armani. KELLY PRESTON is in Dolce & Gabbana. (<http://oscar.com/oscar/night/redcarpet/?pn=gallery&g=0&i=89>; 07th April 2007,



(<http://0.tqn.com/d/jewelry/1/0/D/D/w/hitaker.jpg>; 23rd March 2008, 01.46 pm.

The pictures above were John Travolta and his spouse and Forest Whitaker and his wife. As the other guest whose came to the Academy Award with their Oscar dates, the media asked them to pose and took their picture. People were very pleased to see their idols and

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their fans because for them their idol and the spouse were reflecting their beliefs in romantic love.

3. The Bestowed Ceremony

The Annual Academy Award was best known for its glamour and prominence. It was seen from the dress code of the ceremony. Those who involved and attended the ceremony should be well dressed. The women usually dressed in evening gown and the male mostly used the black suit and tie. Even the backstage crews whom prepared the stage decoration and property also had to dress formally. The glamorous was also seen from the place, the stage, and the decoration of the ceremony.



([http://images.google.co.id/imgres?imgurl=http://blog.emerson.edu/Oscars2007/oscar_setup_022007.jpg&imgrefurl=http://blog.emerson.edu/Oscars2007/2007/02/&h=332&w=500&sz=116&hl=id&start=54&tbnid=huaKgdiY0EsFtM:&tbnh=86&tbnw=130&prev=/images%3Fq%3D79th%2Boscar%2Baward%26start%3D36%26gbv%3D2%26ndsp%3D18%26svnum%3D10%26hl%3Did%26sa%3DN;](http://images.google.co.id/imgres?imgurl=http://blog.emerson.edu/Oscars2007/oscar_setup_022007.jpg&imgrefurl=http://blog.emerson.edu/Oscars2007/2007/02/&h=332&w=500&sz=116&hl=id&start=54&tbnid=huaKgdiY0EsFtM:&tbnh=86&tbnw=130&prev=/images%3Fq%3D79th%2Boscar%2Baward%26start%3D36%26gbv%3D2%26ndsp%3D18%26svnum%3D10%26hl%3Did%26sa%3DN;16th) 16th February 2010, 03.52 pm)



(On stage Helen Mirren and two-time Academy Award-winning actor Tom Hanks present at the 79th Academy Awards in Hollywood, California, on Sunday. http://photos.mg.co.za/view_photo.php?pid=351&gid=25; 26th March 2007, 03.45 pm)

As it can be seen from the pictures above that the decoration of the 79th Annual Academy Award itself reflected the glamour and magnificence of the ceremony. More over, the facilities for the guests also reflected the myth of material success. The best rooms hotel with the best view, the fancy hybrid limousines that took the guest to the ceremony, the high-end designer wardrobes, were some of the best facilities which can be said, as an honor from the Academy of Motion Pictures and Art to the hard work of the actors, actresses, and others who were involved and hard work in the film industry.

The peak of the 79th Annual Academy Award was the bestowed ceremony. There were two main activities in this session, the announcement of the award winners and the entertainment. The entertainments in the Annual Academy Award Night can be in form of singing, comedian, and others. In the 79th Annual Academy Award the entertainment were in the form of singing, comedian, and interpretive depictions of films' titles and logos. The entertainers in the Academy

Award Night were highly skilled and considered to be the prominent in their field.

Music or the singing performances in The Annual Academy Award Night are usually taken from the nominees of the Best Original Soundtrack in that year. In 79th Annual Academy Award the singing performance were done by Melissa Etheridge, sang "I Need to Wake Up", the original song of "*The Inconvenient Truth*", Celine Dion with "I Knew I Loved You", James Taylor and Randy Newman in "Our Town", the original song of "*Cars*", The Girls from Dreamgirls (Beyonce Knowles, Jennifer Hudson, Anika Noni Rose, and Keith Robinson) performing their three songs which were nominated as the Best Original Soundtrack "Listen", "Love You I Do", and "Patience" the original song of "*Dreamgirls*".



Pilobolus performing film logos at the Oscar Night
(<http://images.google.co.id/imgres?imgurl=http://www.huffingtonpost.com/eat-the-press/oscarrrrrrrrrr-thumb.JPG>; April 24th, 2009, 07.14 pm.)



The Dreamgirls
(http://theenvelope.latimes.com/galleries/photo/oscars/env-oscars07_show-pg,0,2095347.photogallery?coll=env-photos-oscars&index=21; April 24th, 2009, 07.05 pm.)

The other entertainments in the 79th Annual Academy Award were Sound Effects Choir by Steve Sidwell performed voice effects to a montage of classic films, and Pilobolus, the circus-like group which performed interpretive depictions or siluets of films' titles and logos. And since the Annual Academy Night's duration was long, since the numbers of the catagories were big, comedy was needed to melt and cheer up the awarding ceremony. In this ceremony the comedians were Will Ferrell, Jack Black, John C. Reilly, and Marc Shaiman.

The betowed ceremony itself consisted of parts, which were the announcement of the nominees done by actors, actresses, directors or technicians, the slide shows or montage of the nominees, the opening of the envelop, the announcement of the winner, the bestowal of the statue or statues, and the acceptance speech from the winner. Since the Oscar statue itself represented the success of the winner, the awarding or the bestowal of the statue itself also reflected myths, beliefs and values. The bestowal of the statue and the acceptance

speeches from the winners reflected the myth of hard work. In myth of success, it is believed that every effort and hard work of the people would gained a good fortune in return. In this case, the hard work of the actors, actresses, and other artists and technicians in the film industry were paid with the bestowed of the Oscar statue as the acknowledgement for their dedication to the film industry through their work.

4. The Academy Award Winner

The Annual Academy Award is the most prestigious award in movie making. To be nominated in this award is not an easy task, since this award was determined by 5,830 voting members (the members of the judges differ from year to year because the Board of Governors will invite new members every year). The voting members consist of experts in their field such as actors and actress, directors, make up artist, producers, and others who have won the academy award. They also have to compete with so many people and production to get the voting members' vote. Therefore, to be nominated in this award needs hard work and dedication to their work.

For most winners in 79th Annual Academy Award, it was their first time to receive the Academy Award although most of them have been work in their field for very long time, and have been joined in many productions. To be the winner of the Academy Award they had

to be better than others, since there were so many films produce in Hollywood each year. It was not only because of one or two person a good movie was made, but by the hard work of the film crews, staffs and the actors and actress. All of the element of movie making came together and gave their best effort in their field for one project. That was how a good movie was made.

After giving their best effort in every work they made, the Academy nominees finally get the return. As an example is Martin Scorsese. Martin Scorsese began his career in 1963 and he is still directing up till now. He is a well known director, but the 79th Academy Award was the first Oscar award he won. Although Martin Scorsese was known as a successful director who has a great influence in movie making industry, the path of his career was not always smooth. There were ups and downs along his career.

Scorsese started his career with lots of short movies when he was a student of New York University's film school. His first featured length film was "*Mean Streets*" (1972). Although it did not reach the box office success, it was successful in determining the Scorsese's directing style which is the feel of New York Italian-American street life, rapid editing and troubled male protagonist.

His first breakthrough in movie industry was his work "*Taxi Driver*" (1976). This film raised a controversy when John Hinckley, Jr., made an assassination attempt on then-President Ronald Reagan

and blamed his act on his obsession toward Jodie Foster's character in "*Taxi Driver*". Besides raising a controversy, this film received awards including four Oscar nominations but there were no nomination for Best Director, although the film critics said that through this film Scorsese was established as an accomplished filmmaker operating on a highly skilled level (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Scorsese, 13th February 2010, 06.38 am).

The success of "*Taxi Driver*" encouraged Scorsese to produce his first big budget film "*New York, New York*" (1977). Although Roger Corman already warned him that making entertaining movies could be ended with having no money and time, he still moved ahead with his big project. This film was Scorsese's tribute to his home town and the only musical film he had. Nevertheless, this film did not reach the critics' attention. Moreover, this film became box office failure and gained negative respond from the critics. This failure drove Scorsese to great depression. In this stage he had a serious cocaine addiction. It was Robert de Niro, Scorsese best friend, who persuaded him to leave the cocaine addiction and started to concentrate on his work.

In 1980 Scorsese struggled to leave the cocaine addiction and poured his attention on his project "*Raging Bull*", with the belief that it was his last film he made. As a result, the film get positive respond from the critics and received eight Oscar nominations, including Best Picture, Best Actor for Robert de Niro, and Scorsese's first for Best

Director. Although he did not win the award, the film's success brought him back to the film industry.

After successfully managed his come back, Scorsese keeps on producing the featured length film and most of his film received Academy award nominees. Nevertheless, Scorsese only receives four Oscar nominees for Best Director since then. He received the nomination in "*Last Temptation of Christ*" (1988), "*Goodfellas*" (1990), "*Gangs of New York*" (2002) and "*The Departed*" (2006). After his ups and downs, and all of his hard work, he finally receives his first Academy Award through his film "*The Departed*" (2006) and his hard work was finally paid.

The winners of the 79th Annual Academy Award also reflect the myth of success, for example the Best Actor winner, Forest Whitaker. Whitaker has a long career history, he started his career as co-star in '*Fast times at Ridgemont High*' (1982) alongside Nicholas Cage and Sean Penn. Since then he became co-star and supporting actor in most of his movie. He always gives his best effort in every production he join in. He always goes deep into the character and tries to understand the soul of his character in such a way until he, himself, become the character. Whitaker gains positive opinion from the Critics in most of his performance. However, his career and performance were not always in its peak, he ever got award for the worst performance in

“Battlefield Earth” (2000). Because of his hard work in his role as Idi Amin in *“The Last King of Scotland”* (2006), he finally received the Oscar Award.

The other 79th Academy Award winner was Jennifer Hudson. She won the Oscar for Best Supporting Actress category. It was her first Oscar award. Although the film was Hudson's first professional performance and ended in receiving Oscar award, but the career journey of Jennifer Hudson can not be mentioned as an instant. She started her performance by joining the church choir and community theater. After graduating from Dunbar Vocational Career Academy and worked in Burger King, Hudson joined in the 3rd season of American Idol, but she only ended in 7th position.

Nevertheless, Hudson never gave up and was still struggling in the entertainment world. In 2005 she was cast for musical film *“Dreamgirls”*. She beat professional singers and actresses for the supporting role in this film. Although it was her first big screen movie, Hudson worked very hard by taking acting and vocal class to give her best performance in this film. Her effort gained very good respond, not only from the audience but also from the critics, therefore, she won the Oscar for her first big screen performance. This success also gave her the material success and brought her to the upper social class, from a worker in Burger King to the high economic class. All of her hard works lead to the good fortune, in this case, fame and wealth.

The myth of material success is also reflected by the Oscar winner for Best Supporting Actor, Alan Arkin. Although his childhood was not as beautiful as any other child since his father had to lose his work and be accused of being communist, but his effort to get a better life sent him to be one of the Oscar winner. Raised in a Jewish family with parents as teachers, Arkin showed his talent on art since he was a child. At 10 he attended vocal and acting course, he also joined in a college folk band and a drama class.

He managed his career as an actor from the very beginning level, at a college drama class. After struggling with castings, he finally managed his first Oscar as the nominator for Best Actor in 1966. Although he was nominated for many awards in his career, his greatest achievement was the 79th Academy Award winner for the Best Supporting Actor. This achievement took him to be one of great artists in film industry. Arkin's hard work as an artist was paid by this prestigious award as acknowledgement of his work in film industry. By receiving this award he also became the member of major artists in film industry. As a result, he also managed to uplift his economy class from the middle class to the high society class, It can be seen from his designer clothes and cars.



(http://www.google.co.id/imgres?imgurl=http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2007-02/26/xinsrc_32202042619573752929263.jpg&imgrefurl=http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2007-02/26/content_5773319.htm&usg=__Nu-W4Xubqh68DBZITizoWrkLORA=&h=378&w=500&sz=51&hl=en&start=3&itbs=1&tbnid=kSl14KcOBzEcM:&tbnh=98&tbnw=130&prev=/images%3Fq%3D79th%2Bacademy%2Baward%26hl%3Den%26sa%3DG%26gbv%3D2%26tbs%3Disch:1:11th April 2008, 03.48 pm.)

The storyline of Scorsese, Whitaker, Hudson and Arkin's life and career also reflect the myth of material success, since they came from middle class American family and they finally become high class American society members because of their hard work.

5. The Academy Award Judges and Judging Process

As other fields in American society, the issue of racism also followed the Academy Award judging process. Although it was not explicitly mentioned and seen but most people know that the racial issue was very thick in the Academy Award voting process. It can be seen from the winner of best performance by an actress or actor in the leading role, or widely known as Best Actor and Best Actress Award. Since the first Academy Award was held to the 73rd Academy Award, only one black actor ever receives this award.

From the year of 1927 to 2000, only Sidney Poitier, in 1963 or in the 36th Annual Academy Award, won the Best Performance of an Actor in the Leading Role for his role as Homer Smith in *"Lilies of the Field"*. Since that there were several actors and only one actress won the Leading Role Award. They are, Denzel Washington won the 74th Annual Academy Award for Best Actor in his role as the corrupt, criminal, violent cop, Alonzo Harris, in *"Training Day"* (2001). In that same year, Halle Berry won the Best Actress Award for her role as Leticia Musgrove in *"Monster's Ball"* (2001) and becoming the first and only African-American actress to win Best Actress. In 2004 there was Jamie Fox who won the Best Actor Award for his role as Ray Charles in *"Ray"*, the biography film of Ray Charles. And the latest African-American actor won the Best Actor award was Forest Whitaker for his role as Idi Amin, the dictator of Uganda in *"The Last King of Scotland"* in 79th Annual Academy Award.

There were only five actors and actresses ever won the academy award for best performance by an actor or actress in leading role along the Academy Award history. How can it be so? The lack of opportunity for African-American actors and actresses to be the leading role became the main reason why it could happen. And as we know that whether American society admits it or not, racism still exist in American society although it is not as hard as before. Nevertheless, some people are not satisfied with those answers. They still thought

that Academy Award was only for whites. Although the voting members were dominated by white people, the AMPAS refused to be called as racist. They claimed that the voting process was accountable.

The judging process of the Academy Award was done by voting. The race for Academy Award nomination started on November 2006 when studios and independent distributors started to send their products to each of the voting members and make sure that each of them saw their films. Late on the December 2006, the AMPAS sent the ballot paper and the voting members had two weeks to decide and vote for the Academy nominators. The nominations could only be recommended by the Academy members in the same field, but all of the voting members had the right to recommend the Best Picture nominees. The ballots then were returned to the PricewaterhouseCoopers to count and decide who would be the Academy Award nominees. The results of the nomination balloting were announced on Tuesday, January 23, 2007 by Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences President Sid Ganis and past Oscar nominee Salma Hayek. That was the first round of voting.

The second or the final round of the balloting was in early February 2007. In the early February, the AMPAS would send the ballots and the Academy members would have two weeks to decide who would be the winner for each categories. The nominees for each categories were five, and the Academy members were only allowed to

vote for their concerned categories. Except for the Best Picture award, the entire Academy members would be allowed to vote for the winners. Meanwhile, the Foreign Language Film category was made by a large selected group composed of members from all branches. In addition to the regular annual awards determined by vote of the Academy members, the Academy's Board of Governors was empowered to determine the Scientific and Technical Awards, Honorary Awards, Special Achievement Awards and other special honors.

The ballots were then mailed to the PricewaterhouseCoopers to be counted and decided who would be the winner of the Academy Award. After final ballots were tabulated, only two partners of PricewaterhouseCoopers knew the results and they would strictly maintain the secrecy until the envelopes were opened onstage during the 79th Annual Academy Awards presentation. The complex steps of the Academy award's balloting and the numbers of Academy members who were gifted and skilled artists and craftsmen in the motion picture world showed that only the best work would receive the award. The hard work and dedication from every person who was involved in the award and the success of the AMPAS for banning any sponsors along the award resulted in the prominence of this award. In this way the Academy Award judges and judging process reflected the myth of success.

6. The Academy Award Icon

The Oscar statue is without any doubt to be the most wanted statue in motion picture world, and the most famous. It represents dream, the dream of actors, actresses, directors, producers, and whoever involves in the motion picture world. It also represents the dream of whoever wants to feel the glamorous and the bitter sweet of celebrity life.

The official name of the statue is “The Academy Award of Merit”, but people simply refer it as “The Oscar”. The statue depicts a knight holding a crusader’s sword, standing on a reel of film which have five spokes. The statue was designed by Cedric Gibbons, MGM’s chief art director, and artist George Stanley sculpted the design. The weight of the statue was 8.5 pounds or more than 4 kilograms and 13.5 inches tall or about 34 centimeters height. Although the first time winners often commented on how heavy the statue is, the designer and the sculptor were intentionally made the statue for a handful. It was intended to be long lasting and endure through all kinds of weather and any condition. Therefore, the statue is made of a special kind of material, called “britannia metal”, a pewter-like alloy, plated in copper, nickel silver and 24-karat gold.

The first Oscar statue was made in 1928 at the C.W. Shumway & Sons Foundry in Batavia, Illinois. Nevertheless, since 1983 R.S. Owens & Company, a manufacturer which is based in Chicago, have

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been making around fifty Oscars each year. According to a Bloomberg News report, it costs about five hundred dollars to make an Oscar statuette, while the highest price paid for an Oscar at auction was the \$1.54 million dollar winning bid by the late Michael Jackson for David O. Selznick's Best Picture Oscar (<http://www.helium.com/items/1743092-oscars>; June 16, 2010, 01.00 pm.). The Oscar statue itself was designed in a purpose to cover the aim and nature of the award itself. There were symbolism of American myths, beliefs and values in the statue and here the researcher tried to explain.

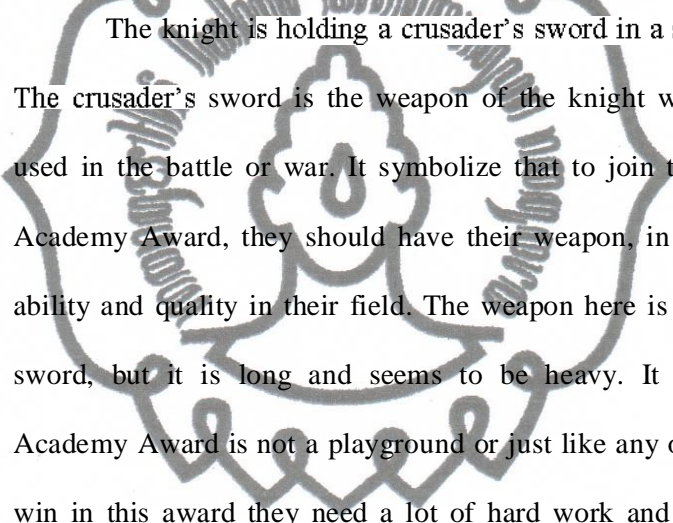


(<http://www.afb.org/Section.asp?SectionID=1&TopicID=181&DocumentID=1052>; March 11, 2010, 03.22 pm.)

The American myths, beliefs and values can obviously be seen from the form of the statue itself. The statue depicts a knight holding a crusader's sword. A knight usually relates to a warrior, a person who has courage and ability to do whatever it takes to defend what he/she

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has and always struggle to get what he/she wants to receive. A knight is not as any other warrior, a knight should have good moral standard in his/her everyday life. Discipline, hard work, and loyalty are some of values that a knight should have. Therefore, the shape of the statue is the representation of every person who is struggling to be the best in film industry, which should have a knight's moral values.



The knight is holding a crusader's sword in a steady position. The crusader's sword is the weapon of the knight which is usually used in the battle or war. It symbolize that to join the race for the Academy Award, they should have their weapon, in this case, their ability and quality in their field. The weapon here is not only a thin sword, but it is long and seems to be heavy. It symbolize that Academy Award is not a playground or just like any other award. To win in this award they need a lot of hard work and better than the other. Therefore, they need a magnificent weapon, in this case, their skills in their field should be excellent. The steady position of the knight in holding the sword means that to win this award they have to be ready at all time to give their best effort in every production they join in.

The Oscar statue is plated in 24 carat gold. Gold symbolizes the wealth and purity. Gold is also considered to be the most valuable metal. Therefore, the gold plated here refers to the prominent

characteristic of the Academy award. Gold plated also represents the highly regard toward the winner of the competition. It symbolizes the fame, famous, and the material success of the award winner. While the knight is standing on a film reel which has five spokes representing the five original Award categories they are actors, directors, producers, writers and technicians.

The icon of the Academy Award, the Oscar statue, also reflects the myth of material success. As it already mentioned, the Oscar statue is plated with gold, and gold is widely known as the symbolization of wealth. Therefore, the Oscar statue reflects the myth of material success in the way it is presented to those whom already give their hard work and best dedication in the movie production. The Academy Award winners already give their hard work in the movie production, therefore, they receive the good fortune in return, or in this case, the Oscar statue which represents the acknowledgement and wealth.



CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusion

After doing the literary review and analyzing the object of the research, in this chapter the researcher concludes the result of this research based on the data analysis. The objectives of this research were to describe what myths, beliefs and values of American society that are reflected in The 79th Annual Academy Award's Night and to know how those myths, beliefs, and values are reflected.

The result is the 79th Annual Academy Award's Night reflects myths, beliefs and values in every part of the ceremony. The myths, beliefs and values that are reflected by the 79th Annual Academy Award's Night are; myth of material success, myth of beauty, myth of endless abundance and myth of romantic love. All of those myths correlate to each other and result in the prominence and glamour of the 79th Annual Academy Award's Night.

The 79th Annual Academy Awards Night reflects myths in every part and details of the ceremony. In the preparation of the ceremony which was done by the Academy staffs and crews and also the guests, the 79th Annual Academy Award's Night reflects the myth of success. The hard work of the staffs, crews and also the guests of this ceremony in preparing the ceremony lead to the prominence and the glamour of this celebration.

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Meanwhile the Red Carpet of the 79th Annual Academy Award reflects the myth of beauty, myth of romantic love, myth of material success, and myth of endless abundance. The appearance of the guests from the body shape, fine dress and expensive jewelries reflects the myth of beauty and myth of endless abundance, while the Oscar Dates reflects the myth of romantic love. The bestowed ceremony of the 79th Annual Academy Award reflects the myth of material success. The journey of the winner and their hard work in their career resulted in the fame and high income. The judges and judging process of the Academy Award reflects the myth of success in the way the nominators had to pass numbers of selections and compete with many competitors to win this award. The winner of the award reflects myth of material success and it can be seen from their life and career journey. While the icon of the Academy Award, the Oscar statue, reflects the myth of success. It can be seen from the effort needed to get this statue and the material of the statue which is gold. Gold represents glory and wealth.

B. Suggestions

The researcher is aware that in this research the researcher still made many mistakes and lacks. Therefore, for the other researchers who will analyze rituals, the researcher suggests them to gather information of the rituals as many as it can to get more abroad the background knowledge of the ritual and to analyze the rituals by its parts. Since a ritual or

ceremony have so many aspects than we can explore more. Moreover, the researcher hopes that this research can help the other researchers to understand more how to analyze a ritual.

